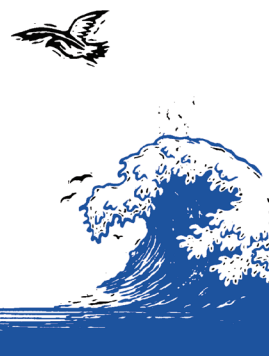


The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



VOL. 21, NO. 11

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

March 2008



The "Soul Sisters" from Our Lady of Lourdes in Victoria were the 1st place winners of the Diocese of Victoria's first annual Adult Catholic Knowledge Bowl held February 24. The winners will be treated to a dinner with Bishop David E. Fellhauer. From left are pictured Suzie Ryan, Linda Brown, Bishop Fellhauer, Emily Yeary and Stephanie Spears. Emily is the mother of Stephanie and Linda. (TCL Photo by Cynthia Brewer)

Pastoral Institute given credit by champs of first Adult Catholic Knowledge Bowl

By Cynthia Brewer

They came from East Bernard, Bay City, Shiner, Moulton and Cuero. Still others came from Ganado, Edna and Meyersville. Who were they, what were they coming to, and why?

They were 32 teams that came to Holy Family Activity Center in Victoria Feb. 24 to compete with one another to claim the title of champion of the first annual Adult Catholic Knowledge Bowl.

The Sunday afternoon competition brought 128 participants and nearly 75 spectators from the 10-county area that makes up the Diocese of Victoria. Teams competed for one of three prizes: dinner with Bishop David E. Fellhauer, \$25 gift certificates from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop, and \$15 gift certificates from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop.

Participant's ages ranged from 23 to 93 years, with Froylan Silva of the "Know Religion" team of LifeTeen, Our

Lady of Sorrows in Victoria, to Catherine Palmer of "A Gent & Three Ladies" of Our Lady of Lourdes in Victoria, proving that learning about your faith doesn't stop with the reception of the sacrament of confirmation.

To open the competition, Gaylan Duncan of Victoria carefully announced the rules to the participants and spectators in a way that made them realize they were in for some serious fun. Bishop Fellhauer and Mr. Duncan took turns calling out sets of 50 questions for each of the three rounds. The questions were also displayed on three large screens in the gymnasium.

In round one, Mr. Duncan kept the challenges on their toes and in stitches with some of his foreign language pronouncements, such as St. Therese of Lis-ee-u-ex. And Bishop Fellhauer let his Latin flow in round two with questions regarding the pope's encyclicals. While the answers
See Pastoral Institute given credit, p. 8

The Challenge of Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship

Editor's Note: Each month until the November election, "The Catholic Lighthouse" will print excerpts of the summary of the U.S. bishops' reflection on forming consciences. To see the full text of the summary or the 43-page document, please go to www.usccb.org/faithfulcitizenship/.

Our nation faces political challenges that demand urgent moral choices.

We are a nation at war, with all of its human costs; a country often divided by race and ethnicity; a nation of immigrants struggling with immigration. We are an affluent society where too many live in poverty; part of a global community confronting terrorism and facing urgent threats to our environment; a culture built on families, where some now question the value of marriage and family life. We pride ourselves on supporting human rights, but we fail even to protect the fundamental right to life, especially for unborn children.

We bishops seek to help Catholics form their consciences in accordance with the truth, so they can make sound moral choices in addressing these challenges. We do not tell Catholics how to vote. The responsibility to make political choices rests with each person and his or her properly formed conscience.

Why Does the Church Teach About Issues Affecting Public Policy?



Faithful
Citizenship

The Church's obligation to participate in shaping the moral character of society is a requirement of our faith, a part of the mission given to us by Jesus Christ.

Faith helps us see more clearly the truth about human life and dignity that we also understand through human reason. As people of both faith and reason, Catholics are called to bring truth to political life and to practice Christ's commandment to "love one another" (Jn 13:34). According to Pope Benedict XVI, "charity must animate the entire lives of the lay

faithful and therefore also their political activity, lived as 'social charity'" (Encyclical Deus Caritas Est, no. 29).

The United States Constitution protects the right of individual believers and religious bodies to participate and speak out without government interference, favoritism, or discrimination. Civil law should recognize and protect the Church's right and responsibility to participate in society without abandoning our central moral convictions. Our nation's tradition of pluralism is enhanced, not threatened, when religious groups and people of faith bring their convictions into public life. The Catholic community brings to the political dialogue a consistent moral framework and broad experience serving those in need.

Texas cardinal takes possession of titular church in Rome

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) — In the simplest of the rites associated with becoming a "prince of the church," Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston took possession of his titular church in Rome.

The cardinal was met at the door of Rome's St. Eusebius Church Feb. 20 by the pastor carrying a crucifix, an altar girl carrying holy water and a priest from the Vatican's office for liturgical ceremonies.

Although the ceremony was simple, it began with a bit of fluttering because the cardinal arrived early. He apologized, explaining that the driver assigned to him was just too good at dealing with Rome's traffic.

After kissing the crucifix, Cardinal DiNardo entered the church, sprinkling with holy water the 150 people who completely filled the little 13th-century building.

The parish youth choir, accompanied by guitars, led the singing as parishioners welcomed the cardinal. Seminarians from the Pontifical North American College in Rome, students from the Rome campus of the University of Dallas and employees of the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See were also in attendance. Bishop Kevin W. Vann of Fort Worth and several U.S. priests working or studying in Rome concelebrated the evening Mass with the cardinal.

Father Gianfranco Martella, the pastor, welcomed Cardinal DiNardo and gave him a history and status report on the parish, which is located in a thriving old neighborhood populated by Italians and immigrants from around the world.

The evening's Gospel reading was about Jesus' disciples arguing over who was first among them and Jesus telling them, "Whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave."

In brief remarks in English during the Mass he celebrated in Italian, the cardinal said, "Isn't it a real punch for a cardinal to have a Gospel text where the two disciples ask for power and the others then get angry because they hadn't thought of it first?"

The Gospel speaks to all Christians, not just cardinals, he said, and reminds them that following Jesus means being the servant of all.

In his Italian-language homily, the cardinal told parishioners that by taking possession of the church "I celebrate Mass this evening as a member of the clergy of Rome," invoking the ancient tradition whereby the cardinals were priests of the city.

"With all my heart I renew my fidelity to the Catholic Church and my full union with the Petrine See as a member of the sacred college," he told them.

NOTICE!

Clarification of the DSA and Capital Campaign appeals

The recently completed "Reflection of Faith" Capital Campaign did not replace the annual Diocesan Services Appeal (DSA); rather it is in addition to the DSA.

The DSA is an annual appeal to support the operations and services of the diocesan chancery offices, including Bishop, Vicar General, Tribunal, Chancellor, Business, Catechetical Ministry, *The Catholic Lighthouse* newspaper, Office of Catholic Schools, Vocations, Youth and Child Protection, Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Reception, Seminarians, Permanent Diaconate and Spiritual Renewal Center.

The Capital Campaign was a one-time fund-raiser to raise monies over a five-year period for special needs/projects of the diocese, including your parish. Please do not confuse the two campaigns.

The materials for the 2008 DSA were mailed to homes the last week of February. Please be generous in keeping the diocesan chancery offices open and working for you. Thank you.



Bishop Fellhauer's Schedule

March

- 5 10:00 a.m., Diocesan Presbyteral Council meeting, Chancery Office
- 9 4:30 p.m., Mass, Youth Spectacular, Holy Family Church, Victoria
- 14 8:05 a.m. School Mass, St. Michael Church, Cuero
12:30 p.m., St. Michael School Golf Tournament, fundraiser, Cuero
- 15 5:30 p.m., Mass, Girl Scouts Religious Recognition Awards, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
- 16 9:00 a.m., Palm Sunday Mass of the Lord's Passion, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
- 18 10:00 a.m., Chrism Mass, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
- 19 3:00 p.m., Diocesan Finance Board meeting, Chancery Office
4:30 p.m., Diocesan Building Board meeting, Chancery Office
- 20 6:30 p.m., Mass of the Lord's Supper, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
- 21 12:15 p.m., Way of the Cross, Holy Trinity Chapel, Victoria
- 22 8:00 p.m., Easter Vigil, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
- 25 6:30 p.m., Clergy Appreciation Night, Knights of Columbus Council 1329, Knights of Columbus Hall, Victoria
- 29 5:30 p.m., Reception, Presidio La Bahia, Goliad
- 30 11:00 a.m., Confirmation Mass, Holy Cross Church East Bernard
3:00 p.m., Mass, Celebration of Father Celestino Say's 50th Anniversary of ordination to the priesthood and his 80th birthday, Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Victoria

April

- 1-2 Dedication of the new Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Houston
- 4 1:00 p.m., Knights of Columbus Council 9088's Annual Bishop's Charity Golf Tournament, Colony Creek Country Club, Victoria
- 5 5:30 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Holy Family Church, Wharton, including St. Joseph Church, Boling
- 6 10:00 a.m., Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Victoria
2:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
6:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of the Gulf Church, Port Lavaca
- 7 10:00 a.m., Texas Bishops' meeting, Mexican American Cultural Center, San Antonio
- 11 7:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Bay City
- 12 5:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, St. Joseph Church, Yoakum

Official Appointments By Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer

The **Rev. Ty J. Bazar** has been appointed to the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Victoria as the Victoria Deanery Representative, to complete the term of the **Rev. Juan Vazquez, O.S.S.T.**



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The Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer

Editor

Cynthia Brewer — e-mail:
cbrewer@victoriadiocese.org

Production/Advertising

Regina Matus-Janak — e-mail: janakr@victoriadiocese.org

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Roe vs. Wade attorney visits Victoria College

By Cynthia Brewer

Sarah Weddington, the lead attorney in Roe vs. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court case that legalized abortion, spoke at Victoria College's Lyceum on February 14, 2008, on the topic, "Some Leaders Are Born Women."

Her talk on women and leadership was good in that she recommended young women to take part in leadership positions in clubs and take debate classes to get leadership experience. This is good advice.

She told the audience that what influenced her to fight for women's rights was when she was told she couldn't go to law school because she was a woman. She grew up when girls' were only allowed to play half-court basketball and women had to get their husband's signature to receive a credit card.

After winning some cases, which gave women more rights, she decided to take on the abortion issue. She believed women were being told what they could and could not do because abortion was not allowed in every state, for any reason, at any time within a pregnancy. Unfortunately, by her taking on the issue, and the U.S. Supreme court siding with her argument, 48 million lives in the United States have been taken through abortion since 1973. That is one third of the population under the age of 35 years; 48 million less young leaders allowed to be "born women" or men.

Victoria College staff admitted that Ms. Weddington would be a controversial guest. But she didn't bring the controversy some were hoping for. The few that attended the talk numbered about 250 according to *The Victoria Advocate*. I would have guessed fewer. Those who protested, did so in a quiet, respectful and dignified way: a peaceful group of about 25 people outside the college lyceum prayed the rosary for the speaker's conversion, and only two people asked her questions about life issues. Her responses did not answer the questions, but instead only reiterated that she wouldn't tell others what to do and she hoped that they wouldn't tell her what to do.

I'm thankful the government told slave owners what to do — that they could no longer hold slaves; and I'm glad we're still told by the government that we're not allowed to shoot and kill people just because they get in our way.

Some things should be choices, others are just morally wrong. Abortion is one of those wrongs that Catholic leaders name "intrinsically evil."

There is a big difference between allowing a high school girl to choose to play basketball on a full court and allowing her to choose to stop the life of the new human being growing within her body.

In Memory of ...

Rev. Daniel J. O'Brien

SAN ANTONIO - The Rev. Daniel J. O'Brien was "Home unto the Lord" on Thursday evening, Feb. 7, 2008, at the age of 85 years. He was born in Dublin, Ireland on Nov. 21, 1922, to the late Martin O'Brien and Julie (Nolan) O'Brien.



He is survived by his sisters, Collette Condron and Theresa O'Brien of Ontario, Canada; nieces Helen Conway, Rita Jones, and Collette Jones; nephews, Anthony Jones, David Condron, and Frank Condron; and many grand-nieces and grand-nephews.

Father Dan was ordained on June 27, 1975. He served in the following parishes: St. Michael in Weimar, St. Thomas More in San Antonio, Sts. Peter and Paul in Plum, St. Peter in Blessing, Sts. Cyril & Methodius in Shiner, and Sacred Heart Parish in Flatonina. Father Dan retired at Sts. Cyril & Methodius Parish in Shiner.

He was at Sts. Cyril & Methodius in Shiner from 1985-89 and then again from 1990-98. Mary Rose Barta, his former secretary, said he never complained even with the handicap of his vision (he suffered for many years from macular degeneration), which limited him from doing some of his hobbies, that of reading and doing crossword puzzles. When he was still able to drive, he enjoyed his days off by going to Victoria to take a swim at the YMCA, walk the mall and have a meal out.

Father Dan was also very proud of his Irish culture and was often heard whistling.

He resided with the Padua Place retirement community of priests in San Antonio since Sept. 8, 1998.

Services were held at the Missionary Servants of St. Anthony Convent Chapel in San Antonio. The Funeral Mass of Resurrection was held on Tuesday, Feb. 12. Interment followed at the cemetery of the Missionary Servants of St. Anthony.

Cards of sympathy to his family may be sent to his sister at the following address:

Colette Condron,
70 Port St., East, Apt. 303.
L5G 4V8
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

**See
Diocesan Services
Appeal (DSA) 2008
On Page 4**

Our Lady of Victory School

2008-2009 New Student Registration
Pre-K3 through 8th Grade



Tuesday, March 18 – OLV Parishioners
Wednesday, March 19 – All Students

8:30am-3:00pm both days
School Office 1311 E. Mesquite

For information call 575-5391

www.ourladyvictory.org

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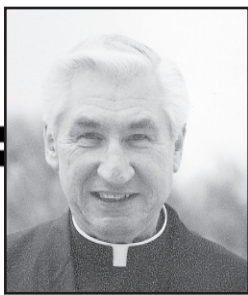
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FAITH POINT

By Rev. Msgr. James C. Brunner
Vicar General, Diocese of Victoria

For past articles: www.stmaryvic.com/desk.htm



Embryo: A Defense of Human Life

In many areas, human life is under dedicated siege. Robert P. George and Christopher Tollefsen have co-authored a book titled "Embryo: A Defense of Human Life" in which they refute various attacks on human life and dignity by secular philosophers.

Animal-rights advocates for example, reject human exceptionalism, claiming that according human life unique value is "speciesism," which is perceived to be as wrong as racism. What really matters according to them is the ability to feel pain. Since both cows and humans feel pain, cows are our moral equals and cattle ranching is akin to slavery.

Related to speciesism is utilitarian bioethics, an essentially anti-humanism movement.

Peter Singer and John Harris maintain that merely being human does not convey value. What matters to them is "personhood." Personhood must be earned by possessing sufficient cognitive capacities such as being aware of and valuing one's own existence. Persons who are not human beings according to this theory do not have the right to life and can be treated ethically as mere natural resources. Thus persons diagnosed as being in a persistent vegetative state can ethically have their organs harvested because they have permanently lost their personhood. Creating embryos through cloning for the purpose of stem-cell research is acceptable because embryos have not yet attained personhood.

Philosophical materialists deny that species distinctions are even real, since other mammals share most of our genes. That opens the door to using weak and vulnerable people in place of animals in medical research.

Some ecologists claim that humans are a vermin species infecting the earth and destroying the balance of nature. They say the solution to this is a radical reduction of human population to fewer than one billion. They do not say how they will accomplish the reduction and look upon war and disease as good news.

George and Tollefsen prove the biological humanity of the embryo from the first moment it comes into being at the conclusion of fertilization. There was a time when such proof was not necessary because embryology and basic biology textbooks clearly taught the simple scientific truth that human life begins at conception. It was only during the abortion debate, and the attempt to use early embryos for scientific research, that the scientific fact was even questioned. Scientifically, a human embryo is not something different in kind from a human being, like a rock, or a rose, or a rhinoceros. A human embryo is a whole living member of the species homo sapiens. The main differences between a one-day-old embryo and a nonagenarian are time and development. Embryos do

not develop into human beings. They are human beings who are developing. They are not potential human life. They are human lives with potential.

The desire to justify abortion has led to new and novel definitions of embryos. Some claim that conception does not take place and a human life does not arise until it implants in a uterus. This is biological nonsense. Implantation does not create a new entity that did not exist previously; fertilization does this. Implantation merely provides a suitable environment for the new human being to grow. The reason for the new definition of conception is that the intrauterine contraceptive device does not prevent conception, the fertilization of the ovum that marks the beginning of

the new human being, but actually prevents implantation. That results in an early stage abortion. While some mothers might countenance contraception, even though the Church condemns it, they might hesitate to take part in abortion. The new definition was not based on any new

scientific finding but was offered only to set their minds at ease.

Abortionists hold that the embryo is merely a bunch of cells, equivalent to a mole, before implantation. Biologically it is actually a fully integrated and self-sustaining organism that begins developing from the moment it comes into being.

Human beings are rational animals. They differ in kind, and not just degree, from the lower animals. Humans have the capacity of reasoning and of making free choices. They do not act out of mere impulse or instinct. Unlike other species of animals, we are persons from the moment we come into existence. We possess a rational nature. Early embryos have no brain or nervous system and fetuses are not consciously aware while some lose the capacity of self-awareness in unconsciousness and sleep. Such humans do not thereby lose their personhood. They still possess the value of belonging to human nature.

The value of human nature is something that is objective, not subjective. Our dignity does not depend on the capacities of the individual, and personhood is not something that we acquired in the process of our development. It comes with the package, meaning that the entire species is steeped in dignity and moral value, attributes that are intrinsic to our very nature as human beings. The fact that some have not yet developed or some have lost their natural capacities is irrelevant to the moral status of humanity.

Defending human dignity is important not only to protect sound morality in the areas of abortion and embryology, but it is the essential condition for the recognition of human rights. If each human being had value moment-by-moment as some theorists maintain, the whole idea of

human rights becomes impossible since our respective value is relative to our capacities at any given time. If some human beings are incapable of self-awareness and thereby lose their personhood, they would no longer be subjects of human rights. Since by definition, when we are unconscious we are not self-aware, we would not have a right to life during that period. Thus when we are unconscious, someone could legitimately harvest our organs or for that matter could legally kill us since at that moment we are not in possession of our personhood according to some theorists. It is correct to say that if human life is not inviolable in the womb, it is not truly sacred at any time.

All innocent human beings have an inherent dignity and have a right to life. Destructive embryonic stem cell research and human cloning are wrong because they violate the bodily integrity and right to life of the developing human person. Abortion is morally wrong because it violates the right to life of an innocent

human person.

All these considerations are strictly scientific or philosophical in nature and the authors present no argument based on a religious teaching as, for example, the fact that each human person from conception onward is an image and likeness of God. It is amusing that religious people are often accused of being superstitious and unscientific by secular thinkers, but it is the secular thinkers who are unscientific and irrational as they squirm and struggle to escape the humanity of the zygote, the new human being that results from fertilization. They make judgments and act in defiance of scientific facts because they get in the way of their desire to justify killing unborn children. For them science is fine as long as it does not interfere with their desires.

I definitely recommend the reading of the book "Embryo: A Defense of Human Life" by anyone interested in the current burning questions of the legality of abortion and embryonic stem cell research.



A DIGNIFIED PROTEST—A group of about 25 people ranging from college to retirement age made a stand for life outside of the Victoria College Fine Arts building February 14. The group prayed three Scriptural rosaries for that day's lyceum speaker's conversion to see that the unborn human is in fact a living being. The speaker was Ms. Sarah Weddington, the lead attorney in Roe vs. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court case that legalized abortion. She came to Victoria to speak on women and leadership with her talk ironically titled "Some Leaders Are Born Women." (See editorial on page 2 for more coverage)

Thank You Note:

Dear Bishop Fellhauer:

Thank you for your diocesan check for \$32,893.62 which has been deposited in the Retirement Fund for Religious account. This brings your total diocesan contributions for all the years of the collection to \$414,606.25. The money has been recorded as part of Appeal XX for 2007.

Your generosity surely helps religious address the many challenges religious face as they age. Your commitment to them is a heartfelt testimony to their faithfulness. Each religious, young and old, are grateful for your support!

Your support and the support of your Retirement Fund for Religious coordinator, pastors, parish priests and deacons are essential to the fund's continued success. We are most grateful for all you do! You can surely rely on the prayers of the over 37,000 religious now over age 70 and the ever increasing numbers of religious who will be retiring very soon. May God bless you as only he can!

Gratefully,
Sister Janice Bader, CPPS
Executive Director
National Religious
Retirement Office

Choice

Choice ...
choice to kill,
choice to sin,
choice to hide,
choice to cause pain,
choice to live in pain,
choice to live in fear,
choice without really knowing
the choice,
choice to live with regret for
the rest of one's life,
choice too easily made by
millions because it was
available,
choice that limited 48 million
persons from ever getting to
make a choice,
choice which may have taken
the life of the person who
would have cured cancer,
... choice unwisely chosen

*My thoughts on the choice
behind abortion —
Cynthia Brewer, Editor*



Seminary Burses

Seminary burses are a permanent fund used for the education of future priests for the Diocese of Victoria. The goal of each burse is \$15,000. The interest from this amount is applied yearly to the education of seminarians. The burses are in memory of or in honor of an individual priest or lay persons, living or deceased. Publication of the burses will appear periodically when new contributions are received.

As of February 28, 2008

	TOTALS
— General Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$91,514.00
In memory of Lillian Szymanski	
by CDA Ct. St. Bernadette 1108	<u>25.00</u>
Total	\$91,539.00

— Rev. John C. Peters Seminary Burse	
No. 4	
Previously reported	\$429.00
In memory of Charles Kvinta Sr. by	
Margaret Kutac	10.00
In memory of Grace Liska by	
Catholic Women's Fraternal	
of Texas KJZT No. 2	<u>5.00</u>
In memory of Ray Henry Kusey	<u>25.00</u>
Total	\$469.00

— Rev. Josephat R. Janak Seminary	
Burse No. 2	
Previously reported	\$73.77
In memory of Jefferey Weyman	
Adamek by Margaret Kutac	20.00
In memory of Valentine Kutac by	
Margaret Kutac	<u>20.00</u>
Total	\$113.77

— Rev. Theophil Okruhlik & Rev. Vincent	
Verdame Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$8,407.00
In honor of Most Rev. Bernard	
Popp's 65th ordination anniversary	
to the priesthood by	
Willie and Tina Hubenak	<u>25.00</u>
Total	\$8,432.00

— Catholic Daughters Court of St. Ann	
No. 369 - Victoria Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$5,488.99
Donation by CDA	
Court St. Ann No. 369	<u>500.00</u>
Total	\$5,988.99

Additional Burses for donations:

- Rev. Jerome J. Stryk
- Rev. Msgr. Julius Petru Burse No. 2
- Rev. Joe Levya
- Rev. Marcus Valenta
- Rev. Godfrey F. Kuratko
- Rev. Msgr. John Hanacek
- Sophie Schmidt
- Rev. Sean Donohue Burse No. 2
- Rev. Msgr. Robert Schmidt
- Rev. Msgr. Vaclavic Bily
- Rev. John C. Bily
- St. Mary's Church – Praha
- St. Mary's Church – High Hill
- Holy Rosary Church – Hostyn Burse No. 2
- Rev. Charles Kram
- William L. Schmidt
- Deceased Priests of Praha
- Sr. M. Perpetua Hawes, IWBS
- Jim Vacek Burse No. 2
- and more burses available for donations

Those wishing to begin a burse or to contribute to an existing seminary burse may do so by sending their contributions with the appropriate burse designation to:

**Seminary Burse, P.O. Box 4070,
Victoria, Texas 77903**

Diocesan Services Appeal '08

Approximately 40 volunteers spent their day at the chancery preparing the 2008 Diocesan Services Appeal materials for mailing to all registered families in our ten-county diocese. We appreciate their hard work with this task.

Every family now has a new six-digit identification number. In order to receive proper credit, please include this new number with your donation. Along with the DSA, there is the Capital Campaign. Due to both campaigns running concurrently, it is imperative to make your check payable to the proper campaign. All monies for the DSA should be directed to "Diocesan Services Appeal" and all monies for the capital campaign should be directed to "Reflection of Faith."

In addition to monthly payments by check, the chancery is now accepting

donations through ACH and credit cards. You may select an automatic withdrawal of funds from your checking account each month, or charge your donation to a credit card. Required information can be found on the reverse side of your pledge card.

A pledge may be a one-time gift or a monthly payment for the ten-month period of March through December.

Thank you for your support of this vital appeal.

Jeri Joseph
Diocese of Victoria
Business Office

Stewardship Thought:

During this Lenten season, let us make a conscientious effort to give God the first fruits of our time, talent and treasure as a gift of gratitude.

Reporting Abuse

If you or someone you know has been sexually abused by a member of the clergy or other church personnel, you can register a complaint.

- Call the Chancery at (361) 573-0828 and ask to speak with the bishop or the chancellor;
- or
- Call Rev. Gary Janak (979) 543-3770 or Sr. Emilie Eilers (361) 575-7111, Coordinators of Pastoral Care and Outreach;
- or
- Write to: Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer
Diocese of Victoria
P.O. Box 4070
Victoria, TX 77903
Mark your letter "Personal and Confidential"

We will also help you bring your concerns to Church officials outside the diocese if the abuse occurred elsewhere and you now reside in the Diocese of Victoria.

If you are unsure about bringing a complaint or would like further information, please contact: Rev. Gary Janak at (979) 543-3770.



NEW MEMBERS FOR SERRA CLUB—At their regular meeting and luncheon at Colony Creek Country Club January 18, District Governor John Stevenson, (back 2nd from left), assisted by Msgr. Eustace Hermes, chaplain (seated right), installed new members of the Victoria Serra Club. They are: seated l-r, Beth Hoffer, Christian Robinson, Judy Gillespie; standing 3rd from left, Mark Westerman, Terry Robinson, Gilbert and Faye Melnar. Also pictured standing left, Dr. Mary Rea Finehout, membership chairman and right, Otto Bleier, president.



CATECHUMENS AND CANDIDATES PRESENTED TO THE BISHOP—On the first Sunday of Lent, Feb. 10, 2008, catechumens and candidates are presented with their godparents and sponsors to Bishop David E. Fellhauer, the bishop of the Diocese of Victoria, at the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion. Thirty-two catechumens from seven parishes and 58 candidates from 11 parishes are planning to enter the Catholic faith on the Easter Vigil. Above are the catechumens and their godparents; they will receive all three sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil. Below are the candidates and their sponsors; they will receive the sacrament of reconciliation and Communion. (TCL photos by Cynthia Brewer)



Book on Priest Identity published By USCCB's Father David Touns

WASHINGTON—Father David L. Touns, associate director at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, has published a book on priests' identity amidst the contemporary crises that affect ministry today.

Reclaiming Our Priestly Character offers a review of the present crisis surrounding priestly identity through careful theological scholarship and a wise practical spirituality, providing a clear path toward the renewal of the priestly character, according to information provided by the publisher, the Institute for Priestly Formation at Omaha's Creighton University.

In his 216-page book Father Touns looks at the cultural upheaval that followed the Second Vatican Council and suggests that it led to confusion about the distinctive role of the priest among laity and even among clergy themselves.

The book suggests ways to keep a

priest's life from becoming routine, to deal with frustrations and disappointments, and to pattern one's life after Jesus.

Several church leaders endorsed the book, including Cardinal Avery Dulles, a leading theologian.

"If the priesthood is to be renewed – and it surely must be – the renewal must take the form described by Father Touns," Cardinal Dulles said.

Archbishop Edwin O'Brien of Baltimore, an experienced seminary rector, called the book "a most valuable and spiritually enriching reflection on today's priesthood," and added, "I could not recommend this work more highly."

Father Touns was ordained for the Diocese of Tampa-St. Petersburg, Florida. He studied for the priesthood at North American College, in Rome, and holds a doctorate in dogmatic theology from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum).



“Apprentice” star releases new book, “Gut Check,” for men in their 20s

“You’re fired!”

Only a few years into a career marked by dazzling early success, Tarek Saab’s life took a dramatic turn with his selection for Donald Trump’s reality show, *The Apprentice*. Viewers soon noticed something unusual about Tarek. Throughout the chaos and pressure—including several boardroom showdowns with Trump—Tarek displayed a forgotten kind of manhood. In a new book, he shares his hard-won insights into love, work, and manhood and their source in a faith that is ever old, ever new.

The biggest problem by far facing men in their twenties is the crisis of manhood. Offering a completely new take on the so-called “quarter-life crisis,” Tarek describes his reluctant confrontation with career, relationships, and spiritual disillusionment and reveals the surprising truths he learned

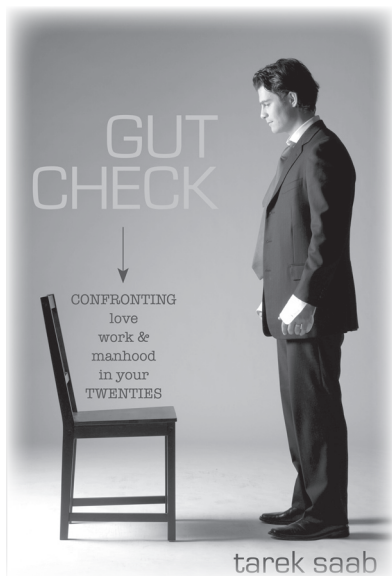
about what it means to be a man.

A distinctly modern-day Confessions, “Gut Check” is the wry and candid self-examination of a man whose life, despite its extraordinary twists, is full of lessons for ordinary young men. Tarek’s captivating tale reveals a young man with many talents and temptations whose saving grace is a relentless pursuit of truth and the daring to be counter-cultural. Gritty, comic, utterly believable—“Gut Check” is not the usual Christian fairy tale.

“Gut Check” is a manual for manhood lived the hard way. It is a book for men who never read and for men who think they have read it all. If you think you know what

you really want, are you ready for a gut check?

To purchase a \$19.95, signed copy of “Gut Check,” just released on March 1, go to: www.BuyGutCheck.com. To learn more about Tarek, go to his Web site at: www.TSaab.com.



tarek saab

Australia releases coins, stamps to commemorate papal visit for WYD

By Dan McAloon
Catholic News Service

SYDNEY, Australia (CNS) -- Australia has released a special series of coins and postage stamps to commemorate Pope Benedict XVI’s visit to Australia for World Youth Day in Sydney as organizers confirmed new details of the July 15-20 events.

Australia Post released one domestic stamp and two international stamps with the pope’s picture and the World Youth Day 2008 logo. A limited edition of gold- and silver-coated World Youth Day stamps, the first stamps of their kind to be produced by Australia Post for an event, were also released March 4.

The Perth Mint released limited gold and silver 1-ounce coins depicting Pope Benedict, the World Youth Day logo and the inscription “World Youth Day Sydney 2008” on the reverse side.

John Watkins, a member of the Australian state of New South Wales’ Legislative Assembly, announced that Pope Benedict will stay in the residence of Sydney Cardinal George Pell. The papal residence is located next to St. Mary’s Cathedral, which will be the focus of

eucharistic adoration during World Youth Day; authorities envision a massive security and logistical exercise to cope with the pope’s stay.

Watkins said the pope’s itinerary includes travel by boat to some Sydney locations and events. Pope Benedict will step ashore to receive his official welcome July 17.

Danny Casey, chief operating officer for World Youth Day, confirmed that Barangaroo, a stretch of waterfront on the eastern side of Darling Harbor, will host the opening Mass, the papal arrival, two stations of a Way of the Cross and several youth festival events.

He said about 150,000 pilgrims are expected for the opening Mass, which Cardinal Pell will celebrate.

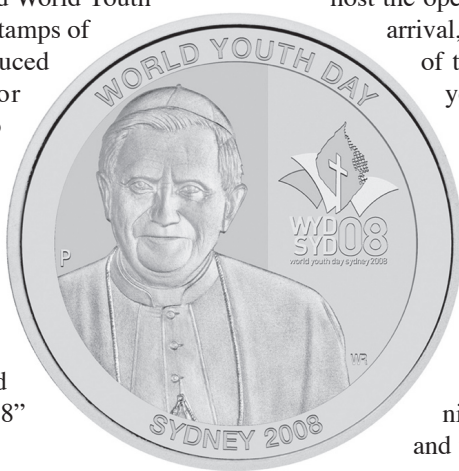
At Royal Randwick Racecourse, the site of the overnight vigil July 19-20 and the closing Mass, the pope will celebrate Mass on an altar specially constructed to hold 1,000 clergy.

The altar is to be built on the highest point of land on the

202-acre racecourse, maximizing the ability to see for 300,000 worshippers within the racecourse perimeter. Another 200,000 in the adjacent Centennial Parklands will watch the Mass on large screens.

The racecourse was last used for a papal Mass in 1995 when Pope John Paul II celebrated the beatification ceremony of Sister Mary MacKillop, founder of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart.

World Youth Day organizers have 10 weeks of exclusive access to Randwick in which to transform the racecourse for the July 20 papal Mass.



World Youth Day commemorative coin features Pope Benedict XVI (CNS photo/courtesy World Youth Day Sydney 2008)

Substitute Adorers Needed

St. Mary’s Adoration Chapel in Victoria is always in need of substitutes. If you are willing to fill in when an adorer needs a substitute, please call Cleo Boldt at 573-6161 or St. Mary Rectory at 573-4328.

On The Cutting Edge

By Sister Margaret Mary Lavanis, CSC



Celebrating the Paschal Mystery

Easter is much more than new clothes, bunnies and baskets of candy. On Easter we celebrate the Resurrection, the most important feast day of the Church. At Easter we renew our faith and welcome new members into the Church. It is the climax of the Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil) and is so important that we celebrate it for seven weeks of the Church Year!

Easter is the fulfillment of the paschal mystery; the suffering, death and rising of Jesus. This mystery is not a one-time historical event. As members of the body of Christ, we live this mystery throughout our lives.

We enter the paschal mystery at baptism. The one who baptizes reminds the recipient or his or her parents that he or she is baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus. This means that all baptized Christians share in his death and rising, not only when we physically die, but throughout our lives.

The paschal mystery assures us that the “pain and dyings” we experience during our lives ultimately lead to resurrection. It is our Christian belief that God can and does bring good out of evil and suffering. Jesus is the greatest example of this. God did not leave Jesus in his pain. God raised him from the dead. Death had no power over him.

Throughout our lives, we, too, are called to share in the paschal mystery. Most of the time it is only in retrospect that we see this mystery at work in us. If we reflect on certain experiences of our lives or the lives of others we can see those times when good came out of suffering.

There are many examples of this cycle of death and rising. I think back on a young student friend of mine at the University of Michigan who was hurt and nearly devastated over the unfaithfulness of her fiancé. The world rose and set on him. She didn’t know how she would ever be able to live without him. Later on, when she got a “real” job, she met and fell in love with another young man who was everything a woman could ask for in a relationship. They are now happily married. As she reflects back on her life she always says that if her first relationship had not failed she would never have met Jeff.

Other people have experienced the pain of being laid off or fired from jobs they really liked only to find one more fulfilling. I know someone who gave his

heart and soul to a company for many years. He earned a lot of money for his wife and children, but never had much quality time with them. The owners sold the company and the new owners gave him his walking papers!!! He was crushed and went into a deep depression. Later he decided to go back to school, got his teaching license, and is now a very happy elementary school teacher. It was something he always wanted to do but did not go that route because of the poor pay!

I have also known people whose suffering has made them more compassionate toward others. There are also people who, as a result of the death of loved ones, have taken up causes to create a better world. One example is the mother whose son died because of drunk driving. She started the organization, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, which does a tremendous amount of good and has saved many lives.

Our own founder, Father Basil Moreau, was misunderstood and suffered greatly at the hands of bishops and even his own community members when he was trying to establish his religious congregation of Holy Cross. From his suffering came four religious congregations whose members serve around the world! Last year he was beatified in Le Mans, France, where Holy Cross began. Hundreds of members of the Holy Cross Family were there to rejoice.

When we really reflect on life, all of us can think of situations where good came out of suffering. Even though we may not see God’s design when we are in the midst of suffering, our own or others, let us remember that God never leaves us in our pain. Like Jesus, God will raise us up.

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— Betty Mitchell —

Parish Catechetical Leader of the Month

The Catholic Lighthouse will randomly honor a parish catechetical leader in the paper each month.

The Catholic Lighthouse thanks and honors Betty Mitchell, the religious education coordinator for the past 18 years at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral, for her many years of service to the church and to families.

Betty taught catechism at Our Lady of Victory for six years and was on the RCIA team for two years before she became the cathedral's religious education leader. Under Betty's leadership, 72 teachers and aides teach between 575 and 625 youth in 31 classes on Wednesday evenings.

Betty taught her first religious class 27 years ago, starting with the fifth grade. "Sharing my faith with children is a very rewarding experience," she said.

She was working with special education students at Stanley Elementary public school when the religious ed. coordinator position at OLV opened. Betty said Msgr. Harrold asked her to consider the job; she said yes and has never regretted it. Betty also teaches baptism class and works with

the parish bereavement program.

What Betty finds most challenging as the religious ed. coordinator is the lack of family involvement in religious education.

"In today's world people are so busy with their jobs and lives that sharing their faith with their children may seem an impossible task for so many," she said. "In some cases the parents may not know their own faith as well as they would like."

Either way parents are still the first and best teachers of religion, she said.

"I see that our main job and the biggest challenge in

religious education is to empower the parents to take on the roll of teacher in the home, we merely reinforce what is taught there. There is no substitute for a parent that is interested and willing to be involved in a child's education," she said.

Betty said that some of the happiest moments as coordinator have been seeing children make their first Communion and seeing the effect it has on their parents. Another highlight is seeing former students come to bring their own children to the church.

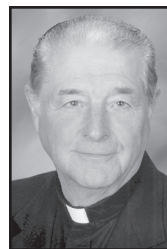
Betty continued, saying, "When former students tell you that something you had said or done has stayed with them and was meaningful to them, that can be worth any long hours or headaches."

"I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the students and families here at Our Lady of Victory, the people are what makes me come back each year," Betty concluded.



Question Corner

By Father John Dietzen
Catholic News Service



Fridays again days of abstinence?

Q. A new priest in our area tells us that all Fridays are again days of abstinence. Another priest says it is a sin if we do not perform some act of penance on Fridays. I know the rules about fast and abstinence during Lent, and we should do some penance on all Fridays, but I've never heard the obligation expressed in terms of sin. Is there a change? (Pennsylvania)

A. No, there is no change. I have a suspicion someone misunderstood the priest, and he was referring to abstinence on all Fridays of Lent. In his apostolic constitution titled "Paenitemini" (Feb. 17, 1966), changing the church regulation about abstinence from meat on Friday, Pope Paul VI was not replacing one kind of sin with another.

The pope said he was pointing out "the implications and importance of the Lord's command to repent," since all members of the church "are in continuous need of conversion and reform." The fact that a spirit of penance is primarily an interior religious experience, he writes, does not lessen the need for exterior practice of this virtue.

Because this need is so essential in Christian life, it "prompts the church, always attentive to the signs of the times, and according to the character of each age, to seek beyond fast and abstinence new expressions more suitable for the realization of the precise goal of penance."

In other words, practices of penance effective for spiritual renewal at one period of time may not be the best for another period. Thus the church today invites everyone to accompany their inner conversion, for example, at times during Lent with "voluntary exercise of external acts of penance."

Note the word "voluntary." One can understand what Pope Paul is getting at in this frantic and stressful age when he says the attitude or virtue of penance should be exercised first of all in persevering faithfulness to the duties of one's state in life.

Not many would dispute that devoted, loving steadfastness in fulfilling our daily responsibilities automatically brings with it numerous opportunities for self-denial and patience.

The pope mentions specifically the difficulties arising from one's work, from one's human relationships, from the stress of insecurity that pervades modern life and the anxieties of each day's struggles as additional sources of mortification and self-restraint.

If anyone lovingly and generously tries to observe these habitual practices of penance the pope offers, it is hardly conceivable that he or she could go through a whole day without some sort of prayer, self-control and expressions of love that are prescribed by our Lord as well as by traditional Christian spirituality.

Pope Paul, in other words, had no intention to belittle or diminish the importance of penance. He was asking something even more demanding; go back to the command of Christ, "If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Lk 9:23), and ask yourself what, if anything, that means to you.

Nine months after the publication of "Paenitemini," the American bishops made its provisions specific for the United States, abrogating the law of Friday abstinence from meat except during Lent.

Without making it a "law," in the spirit of the pope's message they recommended Friday abstinence as a praiseworthy, voluntary (not mandatory) act of self-denial.

(A free brochure in English or Spanish, answering questions Catholics ask about baptism practices and sponsors is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612.)

(Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address, or e-mail: jjdietzen@aol.com.)

When is Saint Patrick's Day celebrated in 2008?

In 2008, the traditional date of Saint Patrick's Day (March 17th) falls on Monday of Holy Week. In most of the dioceses of the United States of America, therefore, the feast will not be commemorated liturgically.

In those places where Saint Patrick is the principal patron of a particular church (Table of Liturgical Days, no. 4c) it is, customarily, commemorated as a solemnity. Because number 60 of the General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar allows that "a solemnity impeded by a liturgical day that takes precedence over it should be transferred to the closest day not listed in nos. 1-8 in the table of precedence," this solemnity may be transferred to Friday, March 14th. It might be noted that, as previously announced in the BCL News-

letter (September, 2006), the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has established that in the year 2008, the Solemnity of Saint Joseph will be transferred from the Wednesday

of Holy Week to March 15th, that is, the Saturday preceding Palm Sunday. This decision impedes the transfer of the solemnity of Saint Patrick to March 15th.

In the vast majority of the dioceses of the United States of America, where the feast of Saint Patrick is commemorated as a non-obligatory memorial, the feast will not be commemorated liturgically in the year 2008.



Diocese of Victoria Library & Media Center

New DVDs & Videos



Big Al LIVE! Gospel Values for Children These brief and engaging presentations include a short Scripture reading, a reflection from Fr. Joe, a discussion with Big Al and a prayer.

(For kids 2-102) Volumes 1-3

• **The Invisible Chapel** For over 20 years a migrant chapel remained invisible to the wealthy residents of a San Diego, Calif., neighborhood. Every Sunday parish volunteers provided humanitarian assistance and held a church service for over 100 impoverished agricultural, construction and service industry workers. 31 minutes

• **Water for Life** The greatest humanitarian crisis in the world today is food and water scarcity issues that threaten the peace and security of most developing nations. This DVD illustrates the work of Catholic Relief Services in partnership with the National Council of Catholic Women in responding to the critical need for water projects in developing countries. 20 minutes

The Library and Media Center houses 1,000s of videos and books on various topics pertaining to the Catholic Church. For more information go to www.victoriadiocese.org and browse our on-line library catalog or call 361-573-0828.

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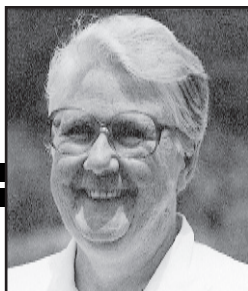
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SISTERLY THOUGHTS

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



An Early Easter

We may wonder why Easter is so early this year. It is interesting to discover that it was at the Council of Nicaea in the Year 325 that it was decided that the feast of the Resurrection of Christ, Easter, would be celebrated on the Sunday following the full moon after the vernal (spring) equinox which can fall any time between March 22 and April 25. (It is important that you remember facts like this in case you plan to participate in future Adult Catholic Knowledge Bowls!)

This year Easter is being celebrated at the beginning of the possible timeframe! So, the time is quickly approaching when we will be rejoicing with all the catechumens and candidates who are seeking to become one with us in the Catholic Church. Together we will commemorate Christ's amazing triumph over sin and death.



human being. While we encourage those who are suffering to join their sufferings with that of Christ, we know that anything we do to accompany them in their trials we do to Christ. We follow the example of Veronica, who ignored the crowd and wiped the blood and sweat from the face of Christ, by taking care of those who are sick and hurting. Like Simon of Cyrene, we try to lighten the load of those who are overwhelmed by the weight of the crosses they are carrying. We do our best to pick up those who have stumbled under their burdens. In circumstances in which we can do nothing to alleviate the struggles of others, we can accompany them and reassure them by our presence just as Jesus' faithful women followers did. Finally, every time



we attend a funeral, we experience some of the same sorrow that Jesus' mother and friends felt and try to

As we anticipate the celebration of Easter, let us prepare for this awesome event by continuing in our observance of Lent. Through our prayer and especially in our participation in the Stations of the Cross, we enter into the suffering and death that Christ endured in order to redeem us. Initially, we see that Jesus is the model of acceptance and perseverance in the face of affliction. Furthermore, we can experience his agony by looking about us and seeing Jesus in those who are experiencing suffering and death – the destiny of every

comfort others by our presence.

If we can enter into Christ's suffering through our prayer, fasting and ministering to our hurting brothers and sisters through our presence and support, we will be spiritually attuned to experience the joy of Easter. We will rejoice with our new Catholic members who will be initiated at the Easter Vigil. We will all join in the alleluias that will resound throughout the world at the celebration of the Risen Jesus. May Easter joy fill our hearts knowing that Jesus has overcome death to redeem us.

Women's Online Study available

Catholic Exchange, a non-profit organization, is now offering a 10-week, online woman's study! The Web site is www.CatholicExchange.com and is owned by a group led by Tom Allen and is run by Mary Kochan. Weekly contributors to the site include Father Frank Pavone, Mark Shea, and Marcellino D'Ambrosio, all faithful to the Magisterium.

Catholic Exchange is offering this online woman's study as a celebration of "Mulieris Dignitatem" and the dignity and vocation of women.

The first session is underway and has been listed on the National Association of Catholic Chaplains for their members as general credit and is being taken for catechetical credit by others.

This is what some of our first session participants are saying:

"I really appreciate what you have done! So many other online courses are very expensive and you have, admirably, kept the cost minimal. The flexibility of the schedule is fantastic! I am a physician, educator and mother of four - flexibility is key! For women who are not completely computer savvy, having your book is helpful. It is easier to meditate with a book in your hands than a laptop on your desk, in my opinion. Your writing is infused with great love and respect for God and

the Church - a stark contrast to the media that accosts us daily... I have told everyone about this and am buying it for my sister as a birthday present!" ~ Jean

"This has been a fabulous experience so far. I had no idea what to expect and I am gaining immensely from this experience — specifically, asking for the Holy Spirit to guide me (which I've not done before), focusing on the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit, pondering our free will, thinking about the questions posed at the end of each chapter. All of these are benefiting me in my daily life. I also enjoy reading the forums, which I have participated in three or four times. I have already thought that I hope you do this again!" ~ Mary

The second session of this study is April 7-June 14 with registration currently underway. The cost of the program is \$35.00 plus S&H – a great value. We are able to offer certificates of completion directly to the participant or to the participant's organization.

The book used, "Renewing Your Christian Self," is an updated edition of "Reclaiming Your Christian Self" which previously received recognition from Catholic Press for gender issues.

To register, please go to: www.CatholicExchange.com.

Twenty-three Years of Catholic Adult Faith Enrichment

Adults who participated in the recent Adult Catholic Knowledge Bowl held at Holy Family Parish in Victoria expressed a desire to learn more about the faith. One of the primary vehicles for this is the Diocese of Victoria Pastoral Institute.

The Pastoral Institute, which was established in 1985 to provide basic courses pertaining to the Catholic faith, has been a source for continuing faith enrichment for countless adults in the 10-county area of the Diocese of Victoria. The Pastoral Institute offers a Short-Term Program of six-hour courses in basic doctrine and catechetical training, a three-year Extended Program of 12 six-week courses, and a Continuing Education Program consisting of on-going Scripture and theological courses.

Look for the schedule of summer and fall classes in *The Catholic Lighthouse* and at www.victoriadiocese.org or call the Catechetical Office at (361) 573-0828.

Chrism Mass
March 18 at 10 a.m.
Our Lady of Victory Cathedral

Chancery Will Be Closed
The Following Days

March 20 - Holy Thursday
March 21 - Good Friday
March 24 - Easter Monday

Have a Blessed
Holy Easter Season



Kevin Kana, new State KJT treasurer at his desk at the state office in La Grange.

Kevin Kana becomes State KJT treasurer

AMMANNSVILLE—Kevin Kana, of St John the Baptist Parish in Ammannsville has been selected the state treasurer of the Catholic Union of Texas (KJT).

He has been a lifelong member of Sts. Martin and Wenceslaus Charter Society No. 4 in Ammannsville.

After graduating from La Grange High School, he attended Texas A&M University in College Station where he earned his bachelor's degree in accounting. His background includes corporate accounting in the medical, insurance, oil and gas, and banking industries.

He is active in his home parish of St John the Baptist where he serves as a lector, extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, rosary leader and usher. In his local KJT society, he is on the building fund committee.

Hallettsville and El Campo hold Lenten missions

HALLETTSVILLE—Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Hallettsville, and St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church, El Campo, hosted very successful parish missions recently. Father Jim Van Dorn, OFM, gave the missions, first to St. Philip Feb. 10 – 13, and at Sacred Heart from Feb. 17 – 20.

"People are hungry for God in their life." Father Jim says that's the primary reason he has devoted himself to giving parish missions.

The inspiration to take on this ministry came from Bishop Wilton Gregory. Some years ago at a gathering of Franciscans he told the friars of a need to rekindle the spiritual life of people and encouraged the friars to take on that challenge.

Parish missions have allowed Father Jim to feed that spiritual hunger. He began by preaching at all the weekend Masses and then gave a presentation Sunday through Wednesday nights.

"People love their Church but are grieving. This is so pronounced that he spends Sunday and Monday focused on healing. "With so much personal suffering and world tragedies like 9/11, Katrina and the tsunami, people are grieving."

He often structures his mission to reflect upon the Paschal Mystery, which takes one from the last supper to Easter resurrection, from suffering and death, to resurrection and hope.

"I have them look at these tragedies and show how they are renewed through

their relationship with God."

Father Jim started each evening with Scripture, "a God Story" he calls it. He is a powerful storyteller in his own right. "I tell stories about the human condition – mine included – where there has been triumph over difficulties through spiritual growth."

"The mission can help guide people in letting go of hurt, seeking forgiveness and reconciliation, and show how this healing, which really comes from God, can be integrated into their life."

Both parishes had extremely good attendance at these Lenten Missions.

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Pastoral Institute given credit by champs of first Adult Catholic Knowledge Bowl

Continued from p. 1

were displayed on the screens during each break, in a private room judges were totaling up the teams' scan trons.

Bishop Fellhauer announced that if any team answered all the questions correctly, he'd make them Monsignors. Luckily for him, at the end of the second round he announced there were no Monsignors in the room; that was until it was noticed that Msgr. Peter Agbenu of Holy Family was there. But unfortunately for the participants, the bishop would not be installing any of them to the position of Monsignor soon.

The first round ended with six teams tied for first. The second round was much tougher with some of the top teams missing many questions. The third round brought four teams to a tie for 2nd and 3rd place, leaving everyone wondering who could have won first place.

But that answer was not to be revealed until 2nd and 3rd places were decided by tiebreaker questions.

The four tying teams were Team 3, "Charity" of CDA Court 1108 of East Bernard with Yvonne Naiser, Charlotte Bucek, Donna Vacek and Patricia Michulka; Team 5, "The Crusaders" of Sts. Cyril & Methodius of Shiner with Joe Machacek, Mary Machacek, Jennifer Peters and Connie Thomas; Team 8, "Moulton Christian Mothers" of St. Joseph Moulton, and Sts. Cyril & Methodius in Shiner with Mary Ann Wenske, Annie Wenske, Bernadette Fikac and Johnine Leininger; and Team 34, "Mix & Match" of Our Lady of Victory and St. Mary's of Victoria with Sue Cotton, Alpha Kimes, Shirley Kloesel and Ann Sala.

It took four, short answer questions to narrow the four teams to two. Questions included, "Private confession began in which century?" (answer: 6th century), and "How many books are in the Catholic Old Testament? How many are in the Jewish and Protestant Old Testament?" (answer: 46 and 39).

The tiebreakers narrowed the winners to the "Moulton Christian Mothers" for third place and "The Crusaders" for second place. Finally the first place winners were announced; they were the "Soul Sisters" of Our Lady of Lourdes in Victoria with Suzie Ryan and mother and daughters, Emily Yeary and Stephanie Spears and Linda Brown.

The team was so excited, for after learning they had missed quite a few

questions in round two, and second and third places were tied by four teams, they thought for sure they'd been eliminated.

"It was a startled surprise," exclaimed Emily Yeary.

"It was fun, and everyone on our team had something to contribute; one of my thoughts was, how proud I was of my daughters," Emily said.

"I have learned a lot about my faith in just the last few years through our diocese's Pastoral Institute and reading various books. I would encourage and challenge everyone to continue to grow in knowledge of their faith for their whole life," said Suzie Ryan.

Both Emily and Suzie had taken the classes in the Pastoral Institute and credited their advantage to the knowledge learned there.

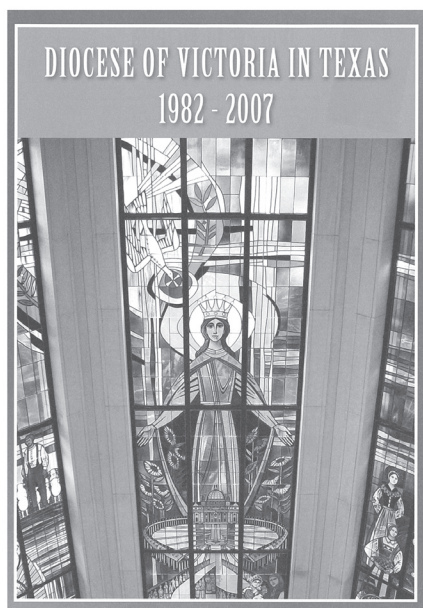
Spectator Jason Richter was advised by his RCIA sponsor to attend the event for preparation toward entering the Catholic faith this Easter.



"The Crusaders" from Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Shiner placed 2nd in the Feb. 24 Diocese of Victoria's first annual Adult Catholic Knowledge Bowl. The winners each received a \$25 gift certificate from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop. From left are pictured Bishop David Fellhauer, Connie Thomas, Jennifer Peters, and Mary and Joe Machacek.



The "Moulton Christian Mothers" (from St. Joe in Moulton and Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Shiner) placed 3rd in the Feb. 24 Diocese of Victoria's first annual Adult Catholic Knowledge Bowl. The winners each received a \$15 gift certificate from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop. From left are pictured Bishop David Fellhauer, Johnine Leininger, Bernadette Fikac, Mary Ann Wenske and Annie Wenske.



They're Here!!!! Diocese of Victoria History Book Available

The history of the diocese is the history of many of our families who were pioneers to this new nation. Many of them faced great hardships to arrive at this part of the world we now know as the Diocese of Victoria.

As the diocese observed the twenty-fifth anniversary (last year) of its establishment, it is great to recall the history which has brought many this far in the journey of faith, hope and love.

The history book is a 8 1/4" X 11 3/4" hard cover, 168 pages of glossy paper in full color throughout at the cost of \$32 each, \$35 if mailed. The books are available in most local parishes and at the chancery office.

The chancery is located at 1505 E. Mesquite Lane in Victoria.

Mini-Catechism Available

The "Penny Catechism," 388 fundamental questions and answers on the Catholic faith, has been revised according to the "Catechism of the Catholic Church" by Brother Charles Madden, OFM Conv. The famous "Penny Catechism" was consulted by G. K. Chesterton as he prepared to enter the Church and by countless thousands of others for well over a century. Originally approved by the Archbishops of England and Wales, the "Penny Catechism" has now been revised in light of the "Catechism of the Catholic Church," American edition issued in 1994. Most of the revisions are in the form of additional questions and answers, especially in those sections concerning Divine Revelation and the Sacraments. Some revisions were made to conform to the terminology used in the "Catechism of the Catholic Church." Others are simply changes to American terminology from the British terminology of the "Penny Catechism."

Great for missionary work, or as a supplemental classroom or CCD text, prison ministry or apologetics and fits conveniently into purse or pocket. Archdiocese of Chicago Imprimatur. PRICE: \$4.50 + \$1.50 S&H, single copy - 48 pages/Saddle stitch. Quantity discounts available: 25+ @ 20% off (\$3.60 each); 50+ @ 35% off (\$2.92 each); 100+ @ 50% off (\$2.25 each). Available through local bookstores; direct from www.RequiemPress.com; toll free at: 1-888-708-7675; or Requiem Press, PO Box 7, Bethune, SC 29009. The author, born and raised in Baltimore, is also the author of "Giving Up Stealing For Lent....And Other Family Stories." It is the humorous story of his large Catholic family growing up in Baltimore, Maryland, during the middle decades of the 20th Century. Price \$9.95, bulk discounts available, use above toll-free number. Paperback, suitable for church racks also.

If you suspect a child has been abused or mistreated, you are required to report it to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or to a law enforcement agency within 48 hours of the time you suspect the child had been or may be abused or neglected.

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Texas Representative Geanie Morrison spoke to the students at St. Joseph High School in Victoria Feb. 27 on the importance of voting. The school's Government Club invited her to the assembly. The club's leaders, seated behind her, are President Sarah Pfeffer (Sr.), Treasurer Lori Mayfield (Sr.), Vice-president Renee Buchhorn (Sr.) and Secretary Jared Kalmus (Jr.).

St. Joseph School hosts Rep. Geanie Morrison at government assembly

By Cynthia Brewer

The Government Club of St. Joseph High School in Victoria hosted Representative Geanie Morrison at a government assembly February 27, 2008, to help explain the importance of voting. Ms. Morrison is the Texas representative for district 30, which includes the counties of Refugio, Victoria, Jackson, De Witt, and Lavaca.

Representative Morrison reviewed the history of voting in the United States and showed the difficulty many groups of Americans had to overcome in order to lawfully vote. At the beginning of our nation one could vote if he were the right religion and was a landowner, in 1869 black men were allowed to vote although there were still many racist obstacles, women were not allowed to vote until 1920 and Native Americans were not able to vote until 1947. In 1971 the voting age was lowered from 21 years to 18 years.

Because many of this year's high school graduates will be eligible to vote, Rep. Morrison encouraged them to do so.

She asked the students if they ever wondered if one's vote really counts. She gave them the example of a politician here in Texas who won an election by 18 votes; and many of her colleagues have won by 10 votes in a district of 140,000 voters. She also gave them the example of President George W. Bush winning the vote in Florida by less than 600 votes, which clinched his election in 2000.

Rep. Morrison encouraged the audience to become politically involved by coming to the capitol, watching the house when in session, providing public testimony on issues that are important to them

or assisting with a campaign.

The St. Joseph Government Club then gave presentations on each of this year's presidential candidates. They emphasized that this was information only, not a campaign rally. These presentations were in preparation of a mock primary election to be held at the school on March 4.

Coming of Age

By Karen Osborne
Catholic News Service



Guide to Internet research

Writing a research paper used to be a physical task on par with what we experience in gym class.

I had to walk to the library, flip through several often misfiled typewritten paper cards, spend three hours choosing heavy academic books from the stacks and strain my back hauling them home in an already-overstuffed backpack.

Today, search engines do all the heavy lifting, in seconds depositing pages of results for my perusal, all without having to leave the comfort of my recliner.

It's useful -- and tempting.

Teens are known for doing much of their research for school on the Internet. While the Internet offers amazing possibilities for the sharing and distribution of information, it also presents challenges for teenagers doing research for school papers.

If the school libraries of my past are an orderly English garden, carefully tended by "gatekeeper" librarians to contain books and sources that would be useful to students, the Internet is a dense, teeming jungle.

Searching for "cats" in an average school library card catalogue would get you books on feline breeds, training and health, all useful enough for a paper.

The Internet takes you further, however, offering access to scholarly papers on veterinary health.

But that search also would net a hundred or so of those cute (but useless) cat pictures with the funny captions, anti-cat Web sites and dozens of results that have nothing at all to do with a school paper.

That means a lot of us are walking around the jungle alone right now, at risk for scratches, getting completely lost and

eating things that look edible but might actually induce vomit.

As the Internet grows, the role of the gatekeeper in what is sometimes a lawless, crazy jungle is increasingly being played by the consumers using it.

And teens, the first Internet generation, are increasingly the ones to have to tell the difference between good research and bad rubbish before anyone else does it for them.

Here's a field guide to Internet research of sorts, and some questions to ask when writing papers for school:

1. Is this site credible and accurate? Who's behind the Web site -- a recognized magazine or newspaper, company PR, gossip or independent research? Does the author sign his or her name and take responsibility for the work? Does the writer seem to have an agenda? Is the writer an expert or a newbie?

2. Is the information supported? Are there other sources cited or referred to, or is the author making unsubstantiated generalizations and biased, one-sided arguments?

3. Is it a work of quality? Stick to

organizations and publications that have checks and balances for sifting information. Book publishers, academic magazines and peer-reviewed journals often act to filter out inaccurate statements and misleading claims. Make sure independent researchers, such as bloggers and those maintaining personal Web sites, have high standards.

4. Never accept a claim you're not sure of without checking it out. The Internet makes it easy to say whatever you'd like whenever you want to, which is wonderful for human expression -- but not academic accuracy.

Today's teens are already shaping the Internet of the future through social networking, music purchasing and instant messaging.

Developing gatekeeper skills allows people to sort through informational briars and brambles to put all of the secrets of the jungle at their fingertips. This will help teens further identify what they need from the Net, making daunting tasks like research projects easier, better and more accurate.

(And, in the case of the cat pictures, a little more hilarious.)

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Bishop David Fellhauer delivers a blessing on a Texas Historical Marker honoring KJT St. Wenceslaus Soc. No. 40 in East Bernard, Texas, on January 27.

Texas Historical Marker dedicated in East Bernard

EAST BERNARD—A Texas Historical Subject Marker honoring KJT St. Wenceslaus Society No. 40 of East Bernard was dedicated and blessed on Sunday, January 27, 2008, in an impressive ceremony following a Polka Mass at Holy Cross Parish.

After welcoming remarks by President Edwin Marik, the Most Reverend David E. Fellhauer, bishop of the Diocese of Victoria, delivered the invocation. This was followed by the Pledges of Allegiance to the U. S. and Texas flags led by Society Vice President Marvin Adamek. The National and State Anthems were then led by the Holy Cross Polka Mass Choir and musicians.

Introduction of guests by Society President Marik were followed by remarks from Larry Sitka, chairman of the Wharton County Historical Commission, and Elo Goerig, state KJT Society president. Mr. Clem Boettcher, mayor of East Bernard, then issued a proclamation from the city of East Bernard. Mr. Marik recognized representatives of the society charter member families who unveiled the historical marker. The text of the marker was then recited by Martha Viktorin. This was followed by the blessing of the marker by Bishop Fellhauer.

Mr. Marik delivered remarks of appreciation to those who played a role in

the marker process and presented Martha Viktorin with an attractive desk clock for her work on the application process. The ceremony was closed with the singing of “Immigrants Waltz” by John and Mark Dujka and a closing prayer by Rev. Donald Ruppert, pastor of Holy Cross Church.

Also attending the ceremony were state and local officials of the KJT Society, various elected officials, and the Honor Guard of Knights of Columbus 4th Degree, Father Nemec Assembly No. 1142 and other guest 4th Degree members.

A Polka Mass at the parish preceded the dedication ceremony with music provided by the Holy Cross Polka Mass Choir and musicians. After the ceremony, a fund-raiser meal and free dance was enjoyed by all at Riverside Hall.

The Texas Historical Commission has recognized KJT St. Wenceslaus Society No. 40 as a significant and educational part of local and Texas history. A subject qualifies for a marker if two basic criteria are met: historical significance and age. Historical significance is established by reviewing its role and importance in local history and the age requirement depends on the topic.

The KJT Historical Marker will be installed on the site of the original social hall built by the society in 1913 on Church Street in East Bernard, Texas.

SENIOR ADULT CATHOLIC KNOWLEDGE BOWL PARTICIPANT HONORED

Catherine Palmer of Our Lady of Lourdes Team No. 24, “A Gent & Three Ladies,” graced the Adult Catholic Knowledge Bowl with her presence as its “most mature” contestant. Ms. Palmer celebrated her 93rd birthday Saturday, February 23, 2008. She received her sacraments of initiation: baptism, Communion, and confirmation at Our Lady of Lourdes. She graduated from Nazareth Academy in 1932. Ms. Palmer moved to Houston and lived there for 45 years before returning to Victoria and Our Lady of Lourdes about 20 years ago. The diocesan Catechetical Office presented Ms. Palmer with a new leather-bound Bible in thanksgiving for her participation. Her involvement is a beautiful example of how Christians never grow old of learning more about their faith nor of growing closer to Jesus. Above Ms. Palmer poses with Bishop David E. Fellhauer.



Saint Peter wrote: “Entrust all your worries to God, since he takes care of you.”

— 1 Peter 5:7



Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Sisters who had taught at St. Joseph High School in Victoria were honored by students, parents and friends during Catholic Schools Week in January 2008. Pictured (from left) are some of the religious sisters who once worked at the school: Sisters Alberta Novosad, Emilie Eilers, Digna Vela, Mildred Truchard, Rose Stewart, Mary Virginia Sheblak and Clare Underbrink. Also attending the Mass but not pictured was Sister Evelyn Korenek, IWBS, general superior.

St. Joseph High School honors IWBS Sisters

During a special Catholic Schools Week Mass, St. Joseph High School paid tribute to the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament.

St. Joseph High School is celebrating its 140th year as a school and gives credit to the IWBS Sisters for their role in saving the school in 1970. The school was being run by the Brothers of Mary when it was announced they would no longer be able to staff it. While many feared the school would be closed, the IWBS Sisters stepped up and would keep the school open.

A plan had been worked out to share facilities between Nazareth Academy and St. Joseph. With the hard work of the Sisters, the transition was made and St. Joseph became a co-ed high school in 1975. At the Catholic Schools Week Mass, the Sisters received a standing ovation from students, parents and special friends of STJ. Following the Mass a reception was held in their honor and they were able to visit with faculty, staff and STJ school board members.



ST. JOSEPH CAPTURES STATE POWERLIFTING TITLE—The St. Joseph Flyers and Lady Flyers captured TAPPS state powerlifting championships on Saturday, February 23, 2008, at Dallas Lutheran High School. Lauren Stubbs and Lori Mayfield won individual titles for the Lady Flyers while Jonathan Hennessey, David Woolson, Jimmy Cupo and Brian Arquisola won individual championships for the Flyers. “They have worked hard all year long; they all deserve a pat on the back,” said coach Cody Shugart. Above is the complete team.



Limited number of tickets available for April 17 D.C. Papal Mass

The Diocese of Victoria has access to a very limited number of tickets for the Thursday, April 17, 2008, Papal Mass to be held in Washington, D.C. Transportation and hotel arrangements are to be made by individual traveler. If number of requests are more than available tickets, a drawing for tickets will be made.

In order to receive a ticket, please phone or mail in name, address and phone number to arrive in chancery office by **Friday, March 14**. Call Cindy Brewer at the chancery office at (361) 573-0828 ext. 31; write to *The Catholic Lighthouse*, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903; or stop by the chancery office at 1505 E. Mesquite Lane, Victoria.



Sacred Heart Catholic School Wins 50th State Championship

HALLETTSVILLE—Congratulations to the Sacred Heart Indians and their coaches on winning the 2007 Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) Football State Championship. The 2007 State Football Championship is the 50th State Championship won by

Sacred Heart, which includes 47 athletic state championships and 3 instrumental band state championships. Sacred Heart Catholic School has won the TAPPS Overall State Championship 7 times (1989, 96, 97, 2004, 05, 06, 07).

Ninety-nine percent of the high school

students were involved in the state championship game as players, band members, cheerleaders, twirlers, and flag corps.

Sacred Heart is indeed blessed to have such gifted and talented students, dedicated coaches, teachers, and staff. Overwhelming parental support is also a

major factor in the success of all of our athletic and academic programs.

Thank you to everyone for their continued support of the endeavors at Sacred Heart, especially the parents, parishioners, and members of the community and surrounding communities.

KC Council 2490 of El Campo receives, gives awards



Knights of Columbus Council 2490 Knight of The Year is Ed Wasek; he is pictured with his family.



The Andy Swoboda Family was selected as the KC Council 2490 Family of the Year.



The Knights of Columbus Council 2490 in El Campo recently received the Lone Star Award For Excellence. This award can only be received after the council has won the Star Council award from Supreme Council and has exceeded the goals set by the state council of meeting its charity goals before Dec. 31, having a First Degree Team, filing all necessary forms to the State and Supreme Council on time, and paying all per capita before December 31. Pictured l. to r. are District Deputy (#148) Kenneth Trochta, Grand Knight A. J. Hlavaty, State Deputy Larry Zapalac, Financial Secretary Billy Fuechec.



YOAKUM KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS DONATE LAWNMOWER—

The Yoakum Knights of Columbus Council 1582 presented a new Ariens commercial grade push mower to Rev. Matthew Huehlefeld, pastor of St. Joseph Church in Yoakum, at their monthly meeting February 13. The lawnmower will be used for the upkeep of St. Joseph Cemetery. Pictured are Grand Knight Don Brown and Rev. Huehlefeld.



OLV PLACES IN MATHCOUNTS COMPETITION—Our Lady of Victory School's team of Aaron Kovar, Christian Wenske, Chris Mason and Cameron Becker placed third in the MathCounts competition sponsored by the local chapter of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers. Christian Wenske also placed second in the individual competition and advances to the state competition in Austin on March 29. MathCounts is a national mathematics competition for middle school students.

FISH FRY BENEFITS ST. PHILIP SCHOOL—

KC Council 2490 in El Campo presented St. Philip Catholic School \$3,000 from the profit of their recent Ash Wednesday Fish Fry. Brittany Baker, daughter of Winston (Bubba) and Patsy Baker sold the most tickets and received one month's tuition.

Pre-K 4 class sold the most tickets and received \$100 while the third grade class received \$75 for selling the second most tickets. The Knights of Columbus would like to thank everyone who supported this fund-raising event. Pictured left to right are: Larry Staff, Fish Fry chairman; Gwen Edwards, St. Philip School principal; and Grand Knight A.J. Hlavaty.





Book Review and March Puzzle Contest Prize

The Greatest Gift is the story of the courageous life and martyrdom of Sister Dorothy Stang, a Catholic nun from Ohio. *The Catholic Lighthouse* reported her murder in the March 2005 issue. The book on her life and death will be the March Family Puzzle Contest prize.

In 1966, Sister Dorothy Stang went to Brazil as a missionary, and in 1982 she moved to a small town in the Amazon to work with an organization to protect poor farmers and their land from loggers and land-developers who stop at nothing – including murder – in pursuit of profits. After testifying at a government panel investigating illegal incursions into protected areas, Sister Dorothy was denounced as a “terrorist” by powerful companies and began receiving death threats. Refusing to be intimidated, she continued her work – until two gunmen shot her six times on a rural Amazon road.

The Greatest Gift is the first biography of this extraordinary woman and her mission. Written by a mainstream journalist who has spent many years in Brazil, it exposes the entrenched collusion between government officials and commercial interests and celebrates the profound courage of Sister Dorothy and others fighting to protect the Amazon jungles and the people eking out a life there.

“Inspired by deep religious conviction, Dorothy Stang gave of herself generously. A book that will resonate with readers of Sister Helen Prejean’s *Dead Man Walking*, *The Greatest Gift* presents not only the story of Sister Dorothy’s tragic death, but the powerful and beautiful lessons of her life.

“Dorothy Stang, born and raised in

Ohio... was revered for her dedication to the ideal of family farmers who extract their sustenance in harmony with the forest. From her base in the frontier town of Anapu, she worked unceasingly to transform settlers along the Trans-Amazon Highway into environmentally conscious,

cohesive, and combative communities, able to resist violent cliques of ranchers and speculators who would lay claim to the same land. Stang saw human rights and environmental conservation in the Amazon as inextricably intertwined. Though poor settlers themselves damage the forest, Stang believed they could learn to manage their land sustainably as a matter of self-preservation. ‘The death of the forest is the end of our

lives,’ she told her followers.” --*National Geographic*

Written by Binka Le Breton, a British journalist and the author of *A Land to Die For, Trapped: Modern Day Slavery in the Brazilian Amazon*, *Voices of the Amazon*, and *Rain Forests* / publisher is Doubleday / Hardcover / February 2008 / \$21.95 / 978-0-385-52218-2 (0-385-52218-5).

KC 1st Degree Exemplification Dates

The Knights of Columbus 1st Degree Exemplification will be held Tuesday, March 11, at 7:00 p.m. at Holy Family Church in Victoria. All diocesan councils who have 1st degree candidates are welcome. First-degree candidates should report by 6:30 p.m. After the ceremony a meal will be served. The 1st Degree Team will be from Council 9088. Other 1st degree exemplification dates are Tuesday, May 13, and Monday, June 23. If you have questions, please contact your council’s local grand knight.

American pays tribute to veterans through a song

By Cynthia Brewer

I received the following story through e-mail. Rarely do I allow myself time to look at forwards, but since this mentioned WWII veterans I wanted to take a look. Unfortunately or maybe fortunately, I wasn’t prepared for how the tribute would affect my emotions, and after watching it I sat at my computer sobbing. I decided then that I had to share it with readers so that more people would have a chance at seeing this tribute and remember to thank a veteran for their sacrifice before it’s too late.

I never had a chance to thank my grandfather for his sacrifice in WWII, as he was killed in the English Channel when his Royal Canadian Navy destroyer, the HMCS Athabaskan, was torpedoed on April 29, 1944. Watching this video allowed me the opportunity to finally grieve for the grandfather that I never knew. My grandfather, Walter Love, left behind parents, siblings, and a wife and three boys, one of whom is my father.

Below is the e-mail message I received:

“The elderly parking lot attendant wasn’t in a good mood!

“Neither was Sam Bierstock. It was around 1:00 a.m., and Bierstock, a Delray Beach, Fla., eye doctor, business consultant, corporate speaker and musician, was bone tired after appearing at an event.

“He pulled up in his car and the parking attendant began to speak. ‘I took two bullets for this country and look what I’m doing,’ he said bitterly.

“At first, Bierstock didn’t know what

to say to the World War II veteran. But he rolled down his window and told the man, ‘Really, from the bottom of my heart, I want to thank you.’

“Then the old soldier began to cry.

“‘That really got to me,’ Bierstock says.

“Cut to today —

“Bierstock, 58, and John Melnick, 54, of Pompano Beach - a member of Bierstock’s band, ‘Dr. Sam and the Managed Care Band’ - have written a song inspired by that old soldier.

“‘Before You Go’ does more than salute those who fought in WWII; it encourages people to thank the aging warriors before they die.

“‘If we had lost that particular war, our whole way of life would have been shot,’ says Bierstock. ‘The WW II soldiers are now dying at the rate of about 2,000 every day. I thought we needed to thank them.’

FAMILY PUZZLE CONTEST

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Family Puzzle Contest Winners

Theresa Staff of St. Philip Parish in El Campo is the February Family Puzzle Contest winner and will receive Patrick Madrid’s “Does the Bible Really Say that?”

Matthew Ervin (11 years) of Holy Cross in Bay City is the winner of the youth puzzle contest. He will receive a gift from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop.

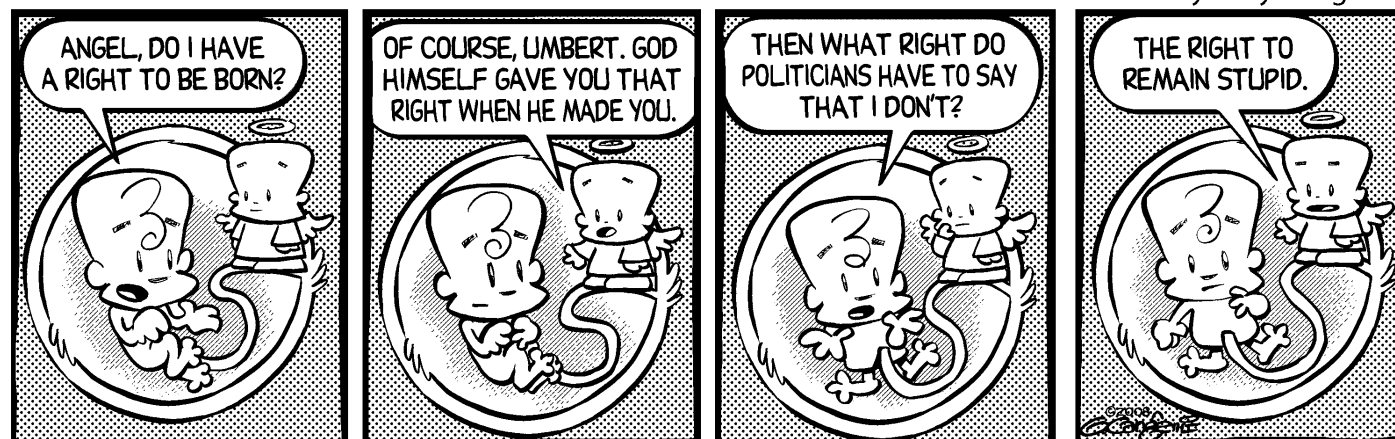
Thank you to everyone who entered the contest this month.

The winner of next month’s contest will win “The Greatest Gift – The Courageous Life and Martyrdom of Sister Dorothy Stang,” by Binka Le Breton.

If you have not won the puzzle contest within the past six months, please send completed puzzle, name, address, phone number and parish name by March 25 to: Family Contest, The Catholic Lighthouse, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903. Only youth need to include age.

Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi





Priestblock 25487 – A Memoir of Dachau ... a “re-review”

By Cynthia Brewer

A book review for Priestblock 25487 was printed in the January issue of *The Catholic Lighthouse* (page 19). I received a copy of it from the publisher and dropped all my other books and began reading it. I finished it in two evenings.

I so highly recommend this book that I am going to donate my copy to the diocesan library at the chancery office. With only one copy, however, very few will have

a chance to check it out, so I recommend people purchase a copy for themselves and then share it with others. It can be purchased online for \$14.95.

Priestblock 25487 is the memoir of Father Jean Bernard who was arrested during WWII and sent to the concentration camp named Dachau. In his diary he tells of what life was like in the prison camp: the minimal food allowed each prisoner, the point-less cruelty, the hard labor, and the constant threat of death.

The book shows the love and tenderness the Catholic priests showed the Eucharist when they were able to celebrate the Mass,

and how the Eucharist gave them spiritual and physical strength to carry on under the constant, immeasurable afflictions they suffered at the hands of their torturers.

There have been many books written by those who have survived the Nazi death camps, but to read one written by a priest who was imprisoned with thousands of other priests shows that the Nazi's truly thought of the Catholic Church as an enemy.

Next month's mini-book-review will be on "Faith, Reason, and the War Against Jihadism" by George Weigel, published by Doubleday.



St. Philip students make new Divine Mercy CD

EL CAMPO—Just in time for the feast of Divine Mercy, celebrated March 30, St. Philip the Apostle Catholic School has released its third and latest CD titled “I Am: Mercy.”

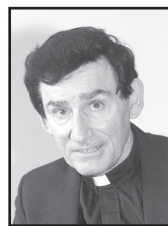
The CD features the children of St. Philip the Apostle School with Father Gary Janak, pastor of St. Philip. Included on the CD are 5 tracks: I will Pray (Instrumental); Vessels of Mercy (Reflection); Litany to Divine Mercy; The Divine Mercy Chaplet; and If We Are The Body (song).

Created by the music ministry of St. Philip Parish, the CD includes a new version of the Divine Mercy Chaplet written by Janice Cox, the parish music director.

The CD may be purchased at the parish, 304 W. Church St., El Campo, TX 77437-3317; (979) 543-3770; Heavenly Helpers, El Campo; or Incarnate Word Gift Shop, Victoria.

The Human Side

By Eugene Hemrick
Catholic News Service



Celebrating Easter

“The pastor should visit the cemetery as often as he is able. This is wholesome for him personally, for his preaching, for his spiritual care and also for his theology.”

To enjoy the wholesomeness of Easter, may I suggest that you take this advice from the noted theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer? Visit a cemetery during the Easter season, even if you aren't a theologian.

Cemeteries remind us of death and are places most of us want to avoid as long as possible. So why do this?

When I was a child, it was a family custom to drive to the cemetery around Easter and visit the graves of our relatives. The lessons this taught were fruitful for dealing with life and understanding the joy of Easter.

First, it taught us that even though deceased relatives weren't with us, they aren't forgotten. We learned to pray for those

who had touched our lives and endowed us with their beautiful spirit. That spirit may have been the laughter of an uncle we find ourselves imitating, the kindness of a grandmother we rely upon as an example or the wisdom of a grandfather we try to live by.

Instead of feeling that they were gone forever, they were seen as a living part of us.

As a priest, I give retreats in places that often have a cemetery nearby. On one retreat I was experiencing some depression. The Benedictine monastery there had a cemetery. As I walked through it and viewed the names on the gravestones, I suddenly experienced a peaceful, reassuring calmness. Later I realized that I was facing death; doing so had a way of “airing out” my fears.

Now when I meet a person who is down, I advise him or her to take a walk through a cemetery. Many people who have done this have told me later that it was the perfect remedy; it restored their peace of mind. Facing death helped them to see life in its entirety and to realize that problems aren't that bad when we realize the life that we hold so sacred isn't the most sacred life we possess.

A wonderful practice while visiting our beloved dead is to meditate on what it must be like to be on the other side now. We pray, “May they rest in peace.” What is that peace like? Is it just resting quietly, free of all anxiety, or is it more? Is the absolute peace for which we pray found when finally we are with Christ in heaven?

The greatest joy on this earth is to be in love with a significant other. Beyond this life, what will it be like to be with the most significant other of all, God?

Easter is a time to reflect on our final resurrection with Christ. What better way to do this than to start with death, the doorway to eternal life and happiness?

Sunday readings from March 9 to April 13

March 9 —
Fifth Sunday
of Lent
Ezekiel 37:12-14
Psalm 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45

March 16 —
Palm Sunday
of the Lord's Passion
Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm 22:2, 8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24
Philippians 2:6-11
Matthew 26:14 – 27:66

Sunset on March 20 to Sunset on March 23 The Paschal Triduum of the Death, Burial and Resurrection of the Lord

March 20 — Holy Thursday
Evening Mass of the
Lord's Supper
Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14
Psalm 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-15

March 21 — Good Friday
of the Lord's Passion
Isaiah 52:13 — 53:12
Psalm 31:2,6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
John 18:1 — 19:42

Easter Vigil in the Holy Night of Easter

March 22 — 1st Reading
Genesis 1:1-2:2
Psalm 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 30, 35
2nd Reading
Genesis 22:1-18
Psalm 16:1, 5, 8, 9-10, 11
3rd Reading
Exodus 14:15 — 15:1
Exodus 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18
4th Reading
Isaiah 54:5-14
Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13
5th Reading
Isaiah 55:1-11
Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6
6th Reading
Baruch 3:9-15, 32 — 4:4
Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11
7th Reading
Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28
Psalm 42:2, 3, 5; 43:3, 4
Epistle
Romans 6:3-11
Gospel
Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
Matthew 28:1-10

The Resurrection of the Lord - The Mass of Easter Day

March 23 —
Acts 10:34a, 37-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23, 24
Colossians 3:1-4 or
1 Corinthians 5:6b-8
John 20:1-9

March 30 —
Second Sunday of
Easter or
Divine Mercy Sunday
Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

April 6 —
Third Sunday of
Easter
Acts 2:14, 22-23
Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11
1 Peter 1:17-21
Luke 24:13-35

April 13 —
Fourth Sunday of
Easter
Acts 2:14a, 36-41
Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b4, 5-6
1 Peter 2:20b-25
John 10:1-10

Lenten Reflections

When I was eighteen, I decided to become a monk. So I looked for a difficult order and found the Trappists ... Entering into God's plan is infinitely vaster than anything we can imagine. My vision and concept of God, the Church, and my vocation were shattered step by step over the years.

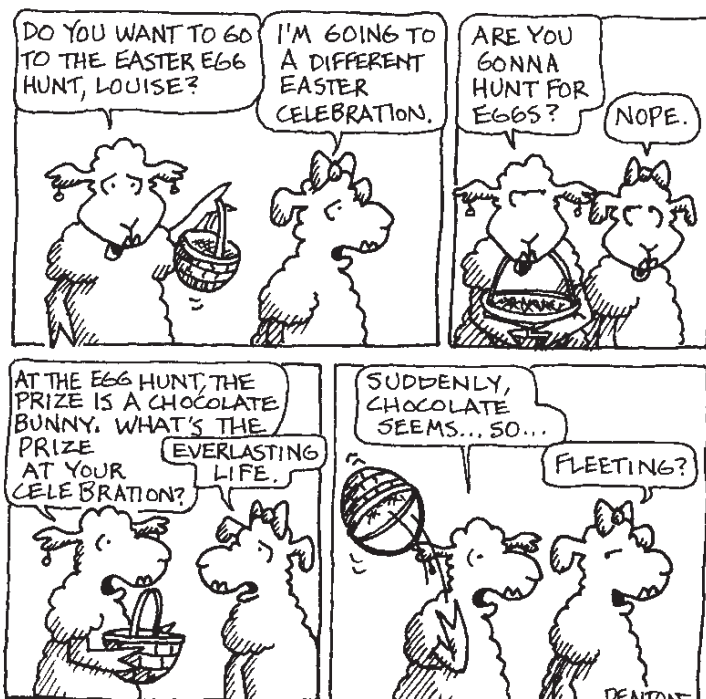
The meaning of the universe is sacrifice. The essence of the spiritual journey is to let go of everything, including one's life and life work. Even Christ had to let go of his intimate relationship with the Father. On the cross, he cries out, “Why do I have to be alienated from You!” The sense of separation from God goes with sin and influences everything we think or do. The willingness to be transformed means letting go of the false self. This is the hardest thing we have to do in this life. The death of the false self is the goal. Total self-surrender is resurrection. Even our spiritual path has to be left behind. God's plan is so long-range for each of us, yet perfect. How mysterious are its turns! The only certainty is that there isn't any.

— Father Thomas Keating, OCSO

Reprinted from River of Light – published by the Marian Center of San Antonio, a Catholic Evangelization Ministry, February 2008.

The Flock

By Jean Denton
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The Rosary – not just for Catholics any more

SAGINAW, Mich. — Two nationally known jingle writers have repackaged their Rosary Tapes so they appeal not only to Catholics but also to all Christians. And they're offering their Grammy Award-nominated Joyful Mysteries free to download on their website.

Bill Gildenstern and John Giaier of Gt TechnoTracks have released The Mysteries of Light on CD after more than five years of writing and re-writing. All meditations, set to contemporary music, are pulled directly from the Bible.

Each meditation is a reflection of the Scripture and the songs are the responses, sung as prayers.

Giaier and Gildenstern purposely designed their new CD so it isn't just for Catholics but for people of all religious traditions who now have another way to pray.

The two Michigan men, who write commercial music for companies nationwide, initially released the Rosary Tapes/The Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries in 1993 with the blessing of Pope John Paul II.

Gildenstern said the Rosary has been a Catholic tradition for centuries. "We wanted to build the Mysteries of Light CD for all Christians and for all ages," Gildenstern added. "We wanted the Rosary and the CD to appeal to everyone, including our parents and our grandchildren. When we analyzed the Scripture passages that were chosen by Pope John Paul II for The Mysteries of Light, we found that, together, they form a very complete, beautiful prayer — a prayer that really needs to be shared with everyone."

"Bill and I sought the advice of a number of people both inside and outside the Catholic tradition before taking on this project," Giaier said. "I very much wanted to

build this CD for everyone. That's why we made it to be something very embraceable by all Christian traditions. And we're not competing with the church organ player here — we're competing with all the other music on your MP3 player."

While writing the first three tapes took Gildenstern & Giaier only a matter of weeks; writing the Mysteries of Light took five years.

In October of 2002, Pope John Paul II observed the 24th anniversary of his papal election by proposing five new mysteries to the Rosary — The Mysteries of Light.

While the Joyful Mysteries contemplate Jesus' birth and youth, the Sorrowful Mysteries reflect the Passion of Christ, and the Glorious Mysteries begin with his resurrection; the Mysteries of Light concern themselves with his teachings. The Mysteries of Light project resulted in what Bill calls "A Complete Conversation With God."

According to Gildenstern, "I think a good conversation with God is a lot like a good conversation with a friend. And I think that Pope John Paul II choosing these five readings for this prayer was a

stroke of absolute genius.

We found the greatest hesitation to the rosary among non-Catholics to be that Jesus alone is our mediator with the Father. And, of course, they're right. But it never hurts to ask someone else to pray through him to the Father. And, if it's his mother, all the better! So, with this in mind, we added an opening prayer to Jesus, asking him to introduce us to his mother, that we may come to know her according to his will. That prayer seemed to make them very comfortable.

What we're doing here all boils down to one thing. By definition, our God is the most important thing in our lives. If he's not, then he's not our God. And the one constant in our lives is time. How much of our time are we willing to spend with the person who we claim is the most important thing in our lives?

We're just trying to get people to spend more time in prayer. And the letters that we've received over the past 15 years have told us in no uncertain terms that the payoff is absolutely incredible.

Sample The Mysteries of Light at www.RosaryTapes.com.

Feast of Divine Mercy — March 30

The Feast of Divine Mercy will be celebrated at St. Mary Parish, Victoria, on Divine Mercy Sunday, March 30, from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m., with Mass at 4:00. Featured will be a speaker, Veneration of the Divine Mercy Image, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, recitation of Chaplet followed by D.M. prayers, collection of petitions. Confessions will be heard from 2:00 to 3:30. The Divine Mercy Novena may be recited from Good Friday, March 21, through Saturday, March 29, in preparation

for the feast. Everyone is invited to attend. A plenary indulgence is attached to this feast. Go to www.mercysunday.com to see full text of the decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary.

For those unable to attend at St. Mary Parish in Victoria, please check to see if there will be a special celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday in your parish. Divine Mercy booklets may be purchased at Incarnate Word Gift Shop, Heavenly Helpers, or at: www.divinemercy.com.



The Defense of Life - A Holy Week Reflection

Father Peter West; Priest-Associate, Priests for Life

On Palm Sunday, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Though he was God, he humbled himself to come among us as an embryo. He was born in a stable, worked as a humble carpenter and now he rides into Jerusalem on a donkey knowing he will be betrayed, rejected and crucified.

Christ's Passion reminds us of how great his love is for us. He humbled himself and willingly submitted to such tremendous suffering for us. The Passion should remind us of our dignity and the dignity of each and every human being created in the likeness of God.

Cardinal John Henry Newman points out that even if you were the only sinner in the world, Jesus would have undergone his Passion just for you. We are made in the image and likeness of God, redeemed by his blood. Our destiny is to share everlasting happiness with him in heaven. This dignity belongs to every human being from the moment of conception to natural death. If we fail to ap-

preciate our dignity in the eyes of God or out of sinful pride reject God in his commandments, then we will begin to evaluate others falsely by wealth, health, prestige, outward appearance, size or stage of development.

Many live as if there was no God or they make themselves like gods or claim rights that belong to God alone - who lives, who dies, interfering with God's plan for procreation through contraception, cloning and experimenting on human embryos, euthanasia or physician assisted suicide. We can be tempted to separate ourselves from others, caring only about ourselves and our families alone, with little thought given to eternal life or correcting injustices. But Jesus taught us that we must imitate his humble service. He taught us the way to salvation was to take up our own cross and follow him.

A true follower of Christ will not be afraid to make sacrifices and even face death. By his death and resurrection Jesus has taken away the sting of death. Shortly

before his own death Pope John Paul II said, "We must get used to thinking confidently about the mystery of death so that the definitive encounter with God occurs in a climate of interior peace."

Christians don't fear death, but nor do they cause death. When the early Christians embraced the faith they rejected abortion and infanticide that were common at that time. The Second Vatican Council called abortion and euthanasia infamies that poison human society. It said they do more harm to those who practice them than to those who suffer the injury. Sin always hurts the sinner more than anyone. Judas and Pontius Pilate did more to harm themselves than they did to hurt Jesus.

A woman who had an abortion once said to me about her abortion "The baby dies once, but the woman dies a little bit every day." But the good news is that Christ died for sinners. Through Rachel's Vineyard retreats and other post abortion ministries we promote a message of forgiveness and hope.

The Society of Centurions is

THE POPE SPEAKS

Pope Benedict XVI



CNS photo from Reuters

Pope discusses St. Augustine's conversion, influence on his life

By Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Calling St. Augustine "one of the greatest converts in Christian history," Pope Benedict XVI said the writings of the North African bishop have had a huge influence on his life as a priest and theologian.

At his Feb. 27 general audience, the pope spoke of his "personal devotion and recognition before a figure to whom I feel very closely tied because of the part he played in my life as a theologian, priest and pastor."

In addition, the pope said both his 2006 encyclical, "Deus Caritas Est" ("God Is Love"), and his 2007 encyclical, "Spe Salvi" (on Christian hope), were influenced heavily by the work of St. Augustine.

Concluding a series of audience talks about the doctor of the church who lived from 354 to 430, Pope Benedict focused on what he said were the three stages in St. Augustine's conversion.

"From the beginning, St. Augustine was a passionate seeker of the truth and remained so for his whole life," the pope said.

His conversion began with a "progressive drawing near to Christ," to whom he was introduced by his mother, St. Monica, Pope Benedict said.

"Even though during his youth he lived an errant life, he always felt a deep attraction to Christ," he said.

His esteem for reason and his search for truth led him to study philosophy, but it did not hold all the answers to his questions, the pope said.

The turning point came when he read St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, which tells people to abandon the works of the flesh and cloth themselves with Christ, he said.

"He understood that this verse at that moment was addressed personally to him," Pope Benedict said.

His conversion "culminated in baptism, but did not conclude there," the pope said, because following Jesus is a lifelong process of drawing nearer to him.

Pope Benedict said Christ was the key to St. Augustine's search for truth and his search for God, who appeared to be far off and beyond human reach. But St. Augustine realized that in Christ God "is near. He drew close to us by becoming one of us," he said.

"Only God, who made himself touchable, one of us, is a God to whom one can pray, a God for whom and with whom one can live," the pope said.

After his baptism in 387, St. Augustine returned to Africa and founded a small monastery with some friends. The second stage of his conversion, the pope said, consisted in giving up his "beautiful dream" of dedicating his life to prayer and study by being ordained to the priesthood and assigned to pastoral work.

The pope said the third stage of St. Augustine's conversion was realizing that each day he must ask God's forgiveness for his sins and renew his commitment to following Christ.

"We always need to be washed by Christ," and to humbly recognize "that we are sinners," the pope said.

a group of former abortionists who have now repented. They are named after the Roman centurion spoken of in the Gospel of St. Luke who repented of his role in the crucifixion, glorified God and said "This man was innocent, beyond doubt" (Luke 23, 47).

All of us are called by Christ to serve; to spread his Gospel of mercy and life. What kind of disciples will we be? Will we be like the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. John the Apostle and St. Mary Magdalene who stood faithfully at the foot of the Cross or will we be like Peter who denied Jesus, Judas who betrayed him, Pontius Pilate who condemned an innocent man or the crowd who called out for Barabbas

Blessed Franz Jagerstatter, an Austrian, was beheaded by the Nazis in 1943 when he refused to join the army. In the spring of 1938 he voted against the annexation of Austria by Germany.

Afterwards many citizens were arrested, tortured and killed. In response Blessed Franz said, "I believe what happened that Holy Thursday 1,900 years ago when the crowd was given a free choice between the innocent Savior and the criminal Barabbas."

Sometimes when we vote, we are given a similar choice. Do we vote based on personality, party affiliation or self-interest and forget the unborn or do we vote for people we know will advance our values, starting with the defense of the most important human right - the right to life.

Ask God to help you recognize your dignity as a child of God who died for you. Pray that God will help you to protect the dignity of others, especially those most threatened. Through the Eucharist, which Christ left us as a memorial of his suffering and death, may he give us the strength to build a culture of life.



Sacerdotes Por Vida

Por Father Frank Pavone
Director Nacional



Tarea inconclusa

La revista Inside the Vatican ha designado a la Dra. Alveda King, sobrina de Martin Luther King Jr. y asociada en la labor pastoral de Priests for Life, una de las 10 personas más influyentes del 2007. Se ha convertido en una de las voces señeras de los niños por nacer en los Estados Unidos y el mundo.

Este premio es un signo de los tiempos y también signo del desarrollo del movimiento pro-vida. Los afro-americanos están encontrando su voz en esta cuestión. Aunque los líderes pro-vida se preguntaron durante décadas como “hacer que los afro-americanos se involucren en el movimiento pro-vida,” la pregunta más específica es ¿Cómo podemos alentar a los afro-americanos a que se hagan cargo de las posiciones de liderazgo que les tocan en el movimiento pro-vida y reconozcan que este movimiento les pertenece a ellos tanto como al resto?

El día dedicado a honrar a Martin Luther King en el 2007, tuve el privilegio de proclamar la lectura del Nuevo Testamento en el acto nacional para conmemorar este feriado en el Centro King de Atlanta, Georgia. Uno tras otro los expositores declararon que había una “tarea inconclusa” en relación al sueño del Dr. King, porque todavía existen muchas formas de inequidad e injusticia que afectan a las comunidades negras y a la sociedad en general. Eso es cierto y debe ser atendido.

Sin embargo, muchos se olvidan de la “tarea inconclusa” que constituye la restauración de la protección a los niños por nacer y acabar con la violencia del aborto. Alveda hace esta pregunta muy acertada: “¿Cómo puede sobrevivir el sueño si asesinamos a los niños? Si queremos que viva el sueño del Dr. Martin Luther King, nuestros bebés deben vivir.”

Muchos líderes de las comunidades negras se están dando cuenta que el aborto está destruyendo sus comunidades. La probabilidad de que una mujer negra se haga un aborto es tres veces la de que una mujer blanca lo haga. Aunque las mujeres negras constituyen el 6 % de la población, representan el 36 % de los clientes de la industria del aborto. 1452 niños negros se abortan en promedio cada día en los Estados Unidos. Los principales proveedores de abortos han ubicado el 90 % de sus centros en barrios urbanos con alta concentración de población de raza negra.

Alveda declara confiada que su tío Martin estaría marchando por la vida con nosotros si estuviera vivo hoy. No sólo promovía la igualdad del hombre negro. Defendía la igualdad de todo ser humano.

En Navidad de 1967, Martin Luther

King Jr., predicó las siguientes palabras: “Déjenme decirles que el próximo desafío que debe ocupar nuestra atención si queremos alcanzar paz en la tierra y Buena voluntad con todos los hombres es la afirmación no-violenta de la sacralidad de la vida humana. Cada hombre es alguien porque es hijo de Dios. El hombre es mucho más que una pequeña combinación de electrones en movimiento o una bocanada de humo de una hoguera sin límite. El hombre es hijo de Dios, hecho a su imagen y por lo tanto debe ser respetado como tal. Y cuando verdaderamente creamos en la santidad de la persona humana, dejaremos de explotar a la gente, dejaremos de pisotear a otros con el pie de hierro de la opresión y no mataremos a nadie.”

Febrero era el mes dedicado a recordar la historia de los negros en Estados Unidos. Honremos esa historia aprendiendo a luchar por justicia para todos, incluyendo los no nacidos.

Esta columna se puede encontrar en la página de Internet www.priestsforlife.org/spanish/08-02-11span.htm. Si tiene algún comentario sobre esta columna escribanos a mail@priestforlife.org, Priests for Life, PO Box 141172, Staten Island, NY 10314; Tel: 888-PFL-3448, 718-980-4400; Fax: 718-980-6515; web: www.priestsforlife.org. Por favor, recuerde que necesitamos su apoyo, para ayudar visite www.priestsforlife.org/donation.html

Obispos Responden A Medida Anti-Inmigrante En El Paquete De Estímulo Económico Del Congreso Y A Redadas

WASHINGTON — El Obispo John Wester de Salt Lake City, presidente del Comité sobre Migración de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos (USCCB) y el Obispo Jaime Soto, obispo coadjutor de Sacramento y presidente del consejo directivo de Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC), enviaron el 11 de febrero una carta al secretario de Seguridad Interna (Homeland Security), Michael Chertoff y a la subsecretaria, Julie Myers, expresando la preocupación de los obispos por la creciente actividad de redadas migratorias por parte de la oficina de Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) y los protocolos que se siguen durante tales acciones.

“Aunque ICE ha emitido recientemente una serie de orientaciones sobre qué hacer en caso de redadas en el trabajo, creemos que tales orientaciones no responden a lo que es necesario”, dicen los obispos en su carta, al tiempo que urgen a las autoridades de Inmigración a adoptar protocolos adicionales tales como:

- Evitar que se conduzcan redadas en o cerca de ciertas áreas como iglesias, hospitales, escuelas, centros comunitarios de salud, dispensarios de comida y otras organizaciones comunitarias que ofrecen servicios sociales caritativos.
- Suspender las aprehensiones migratorias en caso de catástrofes naturales o causadas por el hombre.
- Liberar, tras una redada, a aquellos que tengan la responsabilidad primaria de cuidar a miembros de su familia como niños, ancianos y enfermos para que no queden desamparados.
- Facilitar el acceso a consejo legal y

evitar la transferencia de personas a otros lugares lejos de su comunidad.

- Poner en marcha mecanismos para localizar a familiares detenidos como resultado de las aprehensiones.

- Desarrollar planes de educación comunitaria para que la gente sepa qué hacer cuando ocurre una redada u otra acción punitiva por parte de las autoridades migratorias.

Por otro lado, en un comunicado publicado el pasado 7 de febrero, el Obispo Wester criticó la injusticia de nuestras leyes migratorias después de que una provisión en el paquete de estímulo económico aprobado por el Congreso ese mismo día incluyera lenguaje que prohíbe a los inmigrantes indocumentados recibir este reembolso por sus impuestos.

“La decisión de prohibir que los inmigrantes indocumentados que reciban reembolsos por sus impuestos en la ley de estímulo económico resalta la injusticia de nuestro sistema de inmigración. Prueba que estos trabajadores pagan impuestos y contribuyen a nuestra economía. También revela la hipocresía de nuestras leyes. Por un lado, el gobierno intenta deportarlos y, por otro, se embolsa los impuestos que pagan. Esto perpetúa una subclase de trabajadores sin derechos. No deberíamos aceptar el fruto de su trabajo al tiempo que les negamos la protección de nuestras leyes. Como nación democrática que protege los derechos humanos no podemos irle a ambos bandos. El Congreso debe reparar este sistema que está roto y tener el valor de realizar una reforma migratoria amplia”.

Buscando Vida

Por Moises Sandoval
Servicio Noticiero Católico



Una linda misión

Ya con 101 años, Edward Rondthaler de Croton on Hudson, NY., escribió: “Dicen que ‘el hogar es donde está el corazón,’ y eso es verdad. El mío contiene mis memorias más alegres, y vale todo el mundo para mí que me puedo quedar aquí y vivir independientemente. No lo podría hacer sin (el Comité Humanitario de Croton, en inglés, Croton Caring Committee).”

El CCC es una organización de voluntarios laicos de distintas religiones fundada en 1981. Su misión es asistir a los ancianos frágiles, los confinados en casa, los incapacitados y familias en necesidad en esa comunidad 8,000 habitantes al lado del río Hudson.

“Les ayudamos a hallar cuidado apropiado, proporcionándoles oportunidades para participar en eventos comunitarios,

y ofreciéndoles constante apoyo,” dice el boletín de comité. “En todos nuestros esfuerzos buscamos mantener la dignidad de nuestros clientes, proteger su intimidad y asegurarles que agradecemos sus valiosas contribuciones a nuestra comunidad.”

El presidente James A. Harkins añade: “Realizamos esto proporcionando dos comidas diarias por cinco días de cada semana para asegurar propia nutrición cuando es demasiado difícil hacer compras y cocinar, llevándolos a sus citas médicas cuando no tienen otros medios, organizando almuerzos mensuales para que hagan y mantengan amistades y sean activos en la comunidad, dándoles cestos de alimento, regalos y comidas para hacer sus fiestas más felices, y proporcionando servicios personales cuando tienen necesidades especiales.”

Compartiendo en la linda misión de grupos como este -- tengo confianza que habrán grupos similares en muchas otras comunidades -- es un buen antídoto contra la depresión a menudo experimentada en esta temporada.

Acabamos de pasar por “el lunes triste” (22 de enero) cuando según el psicólogo británico Cliff Arnall, el frío, deuda, tiempo desde la Navidad, fracaso de nuestras resoluciones del Año Nuevo, bajos niveles de motivación y el sentido que debemos actuar combinan para hacer ese día el más miserable del año. Arnall

sugiere utilizar esos sentimientos como trampolín para una vida mejor.

La cuaresma provee el estímulo para hacer algo para los demás, servicio muy valioso como demuestra la experiencia de mi amigo Jerry Burton.

Empezó como voluntario en el Comité Humanitario cuando se jubiló de Avon Products. Cada semana por 12 años ha servido como chofer para los clientes con citas médicas. También asiste en los almuerzos, recoge donaciones de alimento y ayuda con otras tareas. “He recibido mucho más de mi trabajo que lo que yo he invertido y de corazón recomiendo que se involucren,” dice.

David Edwards, quien se identifica como un “pastor itinerante posmoderno” y predica 500 veces al año a grupos de jóvenes en muchos estados urgiendo que sean como Cristo, dijo en una entrevista que recibí por correo recientemente, “No basta mantenerse inactivo con pensamientos compasivos. Nuestros pensamientos compasivos deben realizarse en lo que hacemos.... Una vez que uno realiza que ayudar a los otros también es ayudarse a si mismo, el peso de los problemas globales es irrelevante. Uno no es un ejército individual intentando salvar todo el mundo. Uno ayuda simplemente porque hace lo bueno y se siente bien.”

Para los ancianos, quizás el servicio más agradable proveído por el Comité Humanitario de Croton es participar las actividades de la comunidad. Al llegar a los 100 años, Rondthaler, una presencia icónica, fue invitado a la reunión anual de la Asociación de la Biblioteca Libre de Croton. Vino en un traje elegante azul con chaleco: una figura alta y esbelta rebotando el buen humor. Para la clausura del programa, canto una canción de niño, los ABCs, que modificó para la ocasión.

Latin America's great mission starts to take shape, archbishop says

LIMA, Peru (CNS) — The idea of a “great continental mission,” which proved elusive when the bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean met in Aparecida, Brazil, last year, is slowly taking shape, said the prelate responsible for its implementation. Archbishop Hector Cabejos Vidarte of Trujillo, who heads the Peruvian bishops’ conference and serves as coordinator of mission and spirituality for the Latin American bishops’ council,

or CELAM, sees the mission as an ongoing effort that signifies a shift in the way parishes reach out to the faithful. “The idea is that the mission not have a beginning and an end, but that it involve preparation and intensive action over time, along with evaluation,” he said. The archbishop foresees a long-term effort spanning at least 10 or 15 years. “The idea is that it be a permanent mission.



Bishop Bernard F. Popp is surrounded by family and friends upon a return visit Sunday, February 24, to his home parish, St. Mary Catholic Church in Nada, for his 65th anniversary priesthood celebration. Here he is pictured with the “flower girls” of his ordination: (l-r) Sister Anna Marie Popp of Victoria, his sister; his cousins, Bernice Staff Kalina of Garwood and Mary Ann Popp Kozel of Fort Worth, far right, and his brother, Joe Popp of Nada. Contributed Photo

Six U.S. prelates named as delegates, alternates to October synod

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Six U.S. bishops have been named as delegates or alternates to the October world Synod of Bishops that focuses on the Bible. Among the delegates are the president and vice president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago and Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, Ariz., respectively. The other two delegates are Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston and Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl of Washington. Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, Wash., the immediate past USCCB president, has been named as an alternate, as has Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia. The U.S. delegates and alternates were elected by the bishops’ conference and ratified by the pope; their names were released in February. The theme of the synod, scheduled for Oct. 5-26, will be “The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church.”

Bishop Bernard Popp celebrates 65 years as a priest

NADA—The Most Rev. Bernard F. Popp celebrated 65 years as a priest Sunday, Feb. 24, 2008, in his hometown of Nada. He concelebrated Mass with the Revs. Joseph-Vrana and Anthony Boateng-Mensah at St. Mary Catholic Church. Deacon Edward Wendel assisted.

“Bishop Popp reminisced about his ordination 65 years ago,” his niece Marilyn Popp Goerig said. “He said he was always willing to go anywhere God sent him.”

While currently retired, Popp previously served as Auxiliary Bishop to the Archbishop of San Antonio. Most of his years in the priesthood were spent in San Antonio, with a few months in Victoria. Bishop Popp became the second native priest of St. Mary’s Parish to become a bishop. Father Hugo M. Gerbermann, MM, was the first. Gerbermann and Popp had been classmates. “Bishop Popp is retired from full time assignment, but he continues to work with parishes and their needs,” Ms. Goerig said.

The 4th Degree Knights of Columbus served as honor guards for Sunday’s event. St. Mary’s youth choir provided the music and lectors. Gifts were presented by the three ladies who were “flower girls” at the bishop’s ordination to the priesthood in 1943. They were Sister Anna Marie Popp, the bishop’s sister; Bernice Staff Kalina and Mary Ann Popp Kozel, both cousins of the bishop. A reception and luncheon followed at the parish hall.

Born in Nada Dec. 6, 1917, Rev. Popp grew up in a home where parents Ferdinand and Anna Staff Popp instilled in their

children the love of God. The family began and ended each day with prayers. They also attended Mass at St. Mary’s every Sunday. These religious influences prompted three of the Popp’s children to seek vocations within the Catholic church. Popp became an ordained priest and his two sisters became nuns. Sisters Anna Marie and Adelaide Popp are with the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Convent in Victoria. Other siblings include the late Augusta Gerbermann of El Campo; the late Margaret Swoboda of Nada, Joe L. Popp of Nada and the late Lawrence Popp.

Besides regular daily prayers and Sunday Mass, the family gathered to pray the rosary each Saturday evening.

In addition to family influence, the Rev. Popp felt drawn to serve as an altar boy when he became old enough. At the age of nine he would ride his new bicycle two and one-half miles to church to serve the early morning Mass. Father Barnabas Held, who was pastor at St. Mary’s from 1914 until 1927, also played a role in Popp’s spiritual life. In an article in *Today’s Catholic* published in 1983 when he became an ordained bishop, Popp said, “Deep down he is responsible for me going to the seminary.”

Other role models were Msgr. Aloysius Leopold, Father John Gerbermann and Bishop Hugo Gerbermann. All three were from Nada.

The Popp’s were a farming family. The bishop recalls his earliest job was driving mules during the cotton-picking season. These farming experiences created a love of the land and years later he chose gardening as his favorite hobby.

Evidently, his calling suited him well. Bishop Popp said that he never thought about following any vocation besides the religious life, and he has never regretted his decision for a moment.

Popp’s educational background included attending Nada Elementary and High School.

At the age of 17, Bernard completed high school, and in 1935 he entered St. John’s Seminary in San Antonio. He was one of 13 boys and 36 girls from Nada, with a parish of only 180 families, who went on to join the religious life. He was ordained to the priesthood Feb. 24, 1943, at the San Fernando Cathedral. Father Popp’s first Solemn Mass was celebrated in St. Mary’s Church in Nada Feb. 28, 1943.

On June 7, 1983, Msgr. Popp, rector of San Fernando Cathedral, was appointed auxiliary bishop-elect of the Archdiocese of San Antonio by Archbishop Patrick F. Flores. Bishop Popp celebrated his first Pontifical Mass in his hometown parish in Nada July 31, 1983.

Upon his retirement in 1993, he chose to go to St. Benedict Parish and ministered there with Father Edward A. Pavlicek Jr. For many years he kept his Saturday ministry that he started when he was rector at San Fernando Cathedral. He started as a confessor and celebrated liturgy with the Daughters of St. Paul sisters and continued for about 35 years.

Bishop Popp plans to continue writing for *Today’s Catholic*. He has published three books which compiled all his Bible reflections published through the years. He offers Mass for the Daughters of St. Paul and hears confessions for the ACTS retreats. He again will help with ministries in Kerrville when he becomes more mobile.

At the moment, he is at Padua Place in San Antonio where he is temporarily residing while recuperating from a fall.

Editor’s note: From the *El Campo Leader News*. Some information was also compiled from *Today’s Catholic*.

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Bishops say show exploits, degrades those whose bodies are on display

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (CNS) — Two Catholic prelates said they regard the exhibit “Bodies Revealed” that opened Feb. 29 in Kansas City as “an unfortunate exploitation of that which is ‘real’ to teach something that could be accomplished by use of models.” “As such it represents a kind of ‘human taxidermy’ that degrades the actual people who, through their bodies, once lived, loved, prayed and died,” said Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City in Kansas and Bishop Robert W. Finn of Kansas City-St. Joseph. “For these reasons, we do not believe that this exhibit is an appropriate destination for field trips by our Catholic schools,” they added. The exhibit features an array of human bodies in various poses, all preserved through a process of polymer preservation. Various preserved organs are also in the exhibit, which will be at Kansas City’s Union Station through Sept. 1. Atlanta-based Premier Exhibitions is the organizer of the Kansas City show; it also produces a show titled “Bodies: The Exhibition,” which just opened at the Cincinnati Museum Center. Both shows, say their promoter, are aimed at educating people about the human body and how to take better care of their health. A competing show called “Body Worlds” also has been on tour in the United States and other countries. It was put together by Gunther von Hagens, a German anatomist who invented a plastination process for preserving bodies. Questions have been raised about the source of some of the cadavers, namely for “Bodies: The Exhibition,” considered to have the higher profile of Premier’s two shows.



PALESTINIAN BOY CRIES DURING FUNERAL OF RELATIVE KILLED BY ISRAELI TROOPS—A Palestinian boy, a relative of a man who was killed by Israeli troops, cries during a funeral in the Gaza Strip March 3. (CNS photo/Ibraheem Abu Mustafa, Reuters)



ISRAELI STUDENTS SIT UNDER DESKS DURING DRILL—Israeli first-graders sit under their desks during a drill simulating a warning siren for incoming rockets in the southern city of Ashkelon, Israel, March 3. (CNS photo/Amir Cohen, Reuters)

Vatican says baptisms using wrong words are not valid, must be redone

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A baptism administered “in the name of the Creator, and of the Redeemer and of the Sanctifier” is not a baptism at all, said the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The congregation’s statement was published Feb. 29 as a brief response to questions regarding the validity of baptisms using that formula. Asked whether a baptism performed with that formula — or a similar one referring to the “Creator, Liberator and Sustainer” — would be valid, the congregation answered “Negative.” Asked whether people who were initiated with a rite using these formulas would now need to be baptized “in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” the congregation answered “Affirmative.” The congregation said Pope Benedict XVI “approved these responses” and ordered their publication. If either formula — recently initiated in North America to avoid referring to the Trinity with masculine names — was used, the person is not yet formally a Christian and any subsequent sacraments the person received also are invalid, said Cardinal Urbano Navarrete in a commentary commissioned by the doctrinal congregation.

Pope urges Israelis, Palestinians to end ‘spiral of violence’

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — After recent fighting in Gaza and southern Israel left more than 100 people dead, Pope Benedict XVI urged Israelis and Palestinians to unilaterally and unconditionally end “this spiral of violence.” “Only by showing an absolute respect for human life — even that of the enemy — can there be hope of lending a future of peace and coexistence to the younger generations of those people who, together, have their roots in the Holy Land,” he said March 2 after praying the Angelus with people gathered in St. Peter’s Square. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas suspended peace talks with Israel after Israel launched an offensive against targets in the Gaza Strip. Israel said the offensive, which included a temporary invasion of ground troops, was meant to stop Palestinian militants from launching further rocket attacks against Israel. While Israeli ground troops were pulled out March 3, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said, “We are in a state of war” and that further military action against militants in Gaza was likely. More than 100 people, mostly Palestinians of which 50 percent are believed to be civilians, were killed in the fighting, which intensified in early March. The United Nations and the European Union accused Israel of using excessive force.



ARCHBISHOP BLESSES BODY OF ST. PADRE PIO—Archbishop Domenico D’Ambrosio, center, blesses the body of St. Padre Pio during its exhumation in San Giovanni Rotondo, southern Italy, March 2. The body of the saint is to be conserved and put in a new glass coffin and will be displayed for public viewing beginning April 24. (CNS photo/Voce Di Padre Pio via Reuters)

Ambiguities cloud moral, medical issues as end of life nears

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Many Catholics still need to learn about the church’s teachings on end-of-life issues, such as when it might be morally acceptable to reject or terminate life-prolonging treatments, said some participants at a Vatican-sponsored congress. While euthanasia and assisted suicide are always wrong, in some situations the terminally ill or dying can withdraw or refuse treatment and still be in line with church teaching. To help people make informed and ethical decisions, “much work needs to be done in elaborating on the church’s tradition of reasoning about forgoing life-prolonging treatments to make it practical for health care providers and persons who are dying,” said Dr. William Sullivan, director of the Toronto-based International Association of Catholic Bioethicists. Sullivan was one of hundreds of scholars, theologians, religious and health care professionals who turned out for the Pontifical Academy for Life’s Feb. 25-26 international congress, which looked at the scientific and ethical aspects of caring for the terminally ill and dying.

Pope says Catholic aid agencies must give workers spiritual formation

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Catholic aid agencies must offer their workers continual spiritual formation so those in need can witness God’s merciful love, Pope Benedict XVI said. While professional training and technical expertise are important, a “formation of the heart” is indispensable for those who work for church-based charities, he told members of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum in a Feb. 29 audience. The kind of help the church offers humanity “must never be reduced to mere philanthropy, but must be a tangible expression of evangelical love,” he said. Cor Unum, the Vatican agency that promotes and coordinates Catholic charitable giving, held its plenary assembly in Rome and focused on the theme of “Human and Spiritual Qualities of People Who Work in the Church’s Charitable Organizations.”

Kidnappers take Iraqi archbishop, kill his three companions

ROME (CNS) — Kidnappers abducted Chaldean Catholic Archbishop Paulos Faraj Rahho of Mosul, Iraq, and killed the three people who were traveling with him. Chaldean Bishop Rabban al Qas of Arbil told the Rome-based missionary news service AsiaNews that Mosul’s arch-

bishop was kidnapped late Feb. 29 after he finished leading the Way of the Cross. Archbishop Rahho had just left the Church of the Holy Spirit in Mosul and was in his car with three other men when the kidnappers attacked. “The bishop is in the hands of terrorists,” Bishop Qas told AsiaNews. “But we don’t know what physical condition (the archbishop is in); the three men who were with him in the car, including his driver, were killed,” he explained. “It’s a terrible time for our church; pray for us,” he said. The kidnappers have reportedly communicated their demands, which were not made public.

Shared values of Christianity, Islam guide believers, say officials

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — By emphasizing their teachings about faith in God and the obligation to love one’s neighbor, Catholics and Muslims can promote respect for one another and joint actions for peace and justice, said Vatican and Muslim representatives. The spiritual and moral values shared by Christianity and Islam are important for forming consciences and guiding the behavior of believers, said a statement issued after the annual meeting of officials from the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and from al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. The Feb. 25-26 meeting in Cairo focused on the theme “Faith in God and Love of Neighbor as the Foundations for Interreligious Dialogue.” The theme is similar to that which 138 Muslim scholars proposed as the basis of dialogue when they wrote to Pope Benedict XVI and other Christian leaders in October.

Church agencies cushion many blows Iraqi refugees face in Lebanon

BEIRUT, Lebanon (CNS) — Supported with funds from the U.S. bishops’ Catholic Relief Services and other groups, the Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center successfully has negotiated with Lebanese authorities for the release of hundreds of Iraqi refugees detained because of their illegal status. With the reprieve, Iraqis can search for work without fear of arrest. Thirteen Iraqis were released Feb. 29 and more will be released in coming months. CRS, Caritas branches in France and Italy and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees have provided funding to regularize the status of the detainees and pay visa fees, said a CRS statement. Most of the estimated 50,000 Iraqis in Lebanon — including about 5,000 to 10,000 Chaldean Catholics — have been living in Lebanon illegally, unable to receive work permits or access to health services and schools. Each week, more arrive.



Near Neighbors and Far Neighbors

Because last year Congress failed to pass comprehensive immigration reform, 2008 began with a patch quilt of state laws and local ordinances that reflect a national confusion about dealing with immigration. On the one hand, Lake Havasu, Arizona, like a number of other cities, struck an agreement with federal agents to train local police to interrogate and detain all undocumented immigrants for deportation. Conversely, Detroit, with its anti-profiling ordinance, prohibited police from questioning people about their immigration status. These contrasting examples, together with the nearly 250 immigration laws passed in forty-six states last year, highlight the nation's perplexity over a unified policy for undocumented immigrants.

Approximately 12 million undocumented immigrants reside in the United States, and many live in stable families that include legal residents as well as native-born and naturalized citizens plus their children who were born citizens. Polls confirm by a margin of 58 to 35 that Americans support "a program giving illegal immigrants now living in the United States the right to live here legally if they pay a fine and meet other requirements."

Ironically, most research indicates that tougher border enforcement by more Border Patrol agents, more walls and more electronic sensors has actually boosted the undocumented population. Because crossing the Mexican border has become increasingly dangerous, many workers who frequently shuttled back and forth now stay in the United States and eventually send for their families.

The "why" of immigration is explained by push-pull argu-

ments. Poverty pushes people to emigrate. Economic globalization pulls them, because globalization exacerbates the inequalities between nations, encouraging the skilled and desperate from a poorer country to cross borders to a wealthier one. Additionally, the labor demands of a wealthy country like the United States pull the semi-skilled and unskilled workers from less developed countries. A push comes from free trade agreements favoring transnational corporations that create a harsh climate for local businesses forcing workers to emigrate for employment.

Case in point: the United States encouraged the North American Free Trade Act with Canada and Mexico. Since ratification of NAFTA in 1994, Mexico's economy grew disappointedly with increases of decent jobs matching only a third of the millions needed. Average factory wages in Mexico have fallen by more than 5 percent under NAFTA, and unskilled workers are paid only \$5 a day. Already U.S. and Canadian agribusiness corporations with their subsidized crops have underpriced local markets forcing two million Mexican peasant farmers off their land. Today 19 million more Mexicans live in poverty

than when NAFTA was passed.

In a real sense, the economic policies of the United States draw immigrant workers to the employment opportunities here, but the woefully small number of visas available for workers entices them to come illegally.

Demographers predict eventually questions about undocumented workers will fade as the Mexican birthrate declines and Mexico's surplus labor force shrinks. In the next decade millions of skilled baby boomers in the U.S. will retire creating a shortage of workers that will probably beg more immigrant workers.

Meanwhile, people of faith have a unique opportunity to reach out to immigrants who worship with them weekly. They can reject the simplistic argument about who's legal and who's not, because they can develop a relationship through compassion and hear the story of the people in the pew beside them. The faith community can help integrate newcomers dreaming of a dignified life for their families. To people of faith, the categories of alien, illegal or undocumented pale in comparison to "neighbor"—and some neighbors are closer than others.

Making A Difference

By Tony Magliano
Catholic News Service



Fasting for justice

Fasting is not easy. It's a difficult Lenten practice to embrace. After all, eating good food is one of life's joys. But too much of even a good thing is unhealthy.

For those of us who consume more than we should, eating less or denying ourselves fattening treats improves not only our physical health, but aids our spiritual life as well.

Saying no to the urge to eat more helps build the discipline we need to say no to the more serious temptations — like self-centeredness — thrust at us by Satan.

Fasting is meant to help us temper our desires and concentrate more on the needs of others. And if it doesn't do that, it's nothing more than a form of dieting.

Fasting is not an end in itself. Rather, fasting should serve as a means to a more compassionate lifestyle. By denying ourselves a bit of food, we begin in a very small way to experience hunger. And that taste of hunger should lead us to a higher level of concern for the countless men, women and children who suffer the terrible pains of hunger and poverty every day.

Our highly consumerist society with its constant bombardment of messages to buy more things we simply do not need, tempts us to ignore the genuine needs of the poor. So instead of giving from our substance, as Pope John Paul II urged, we throw crumbs to the poor from our abundance.

The U.S. government does the same thing. The former chair of the board of directors of Catholic Relief Services, Bishop John Ricard of Pensacola-Tallahassee, Fla., said, "The United States is the richest nation on earth. And it is a scandal that we are the last among the industrialized nations

in terms of per capita spending on development assistance for the poorest countries in the world."

But Congress doesn't have any trouble finding money for unnecessary "pork barrel" projects, or appropriating over \$160 billion annually for the development and acquisition of new weapons of war.

As Catholic citizens we need to urge local, state and national public officials to permanently fast from indifference toward the poor and greatly increase funds for poverty reduction.

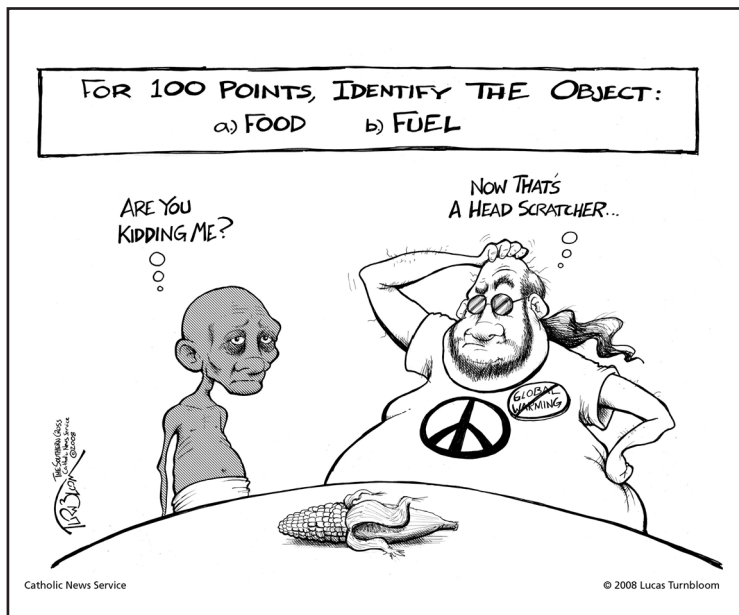
In the Book of Isaiah, the prophet reveals the kind of fast that is truly pleasing to God: "To loose the bonds of injustice ... to let the oppressed go free ... to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them."

Because most of us are not suffering from injustice, not oppressed, not hungry, not homeless, not poor or naked, we don't really understand the pain of those who do suffer these cruelties.

As followers of the Christ, who made himself poor, we are obliged to find ways to identify with those who have so little. And fasting is a way to begin. But we should not stop there.

Educating ourselves on the causes of hunger and poverty, assisting at a soup kitchen or homeless shelter, volunteering to help programs like Habitat for Humanity and sponsoring a child in the developing world are some of the ways we can begin to understand and respond to the pain of those who suffer.

"Then," in the words of Isaiah, our "light shall break forth like the dawn"; we will call out and "the Lord will answer ... 'Here I am.'"



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Faith and Action

By Paul J. Thomas
Office of Parish Social Ministry
Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas

Poverty? Here?

When I was a child growing up, I remember that whenever I heard the word *poverty* I would have images of people in some third-world country. I used to think that poverty was somewhere else, "over there." Perhaps some adults still have this notion that poverty doesn't exist in the USA.

But in its document "Poverty in America: a Threat to the Common Good," Catholic Charities USA states that around 37 million people live below the federal poverty level. This 12.6 percent of our own American population is comprised mostly of what is called the working poor.

Poverty is a social and moral issue no matter where it exists. Poverty means that some of our

brothers and sisters lack the resources to make choices. It means that the things needed for basic human decency are hard to come by. Therefore, poverty isn't just an "issue;" it has a human face.

The first principle of Catholic Social Teaching refers to the *Life and Dignity of the Human Person*. Also, the fourth principle, *Option for the Poor and Vulnerable* means that there must always be choices available to guarantee this dignity.

Christ gave us the two great commandments of loving God and loving neighbor. These are inseparable and as St John writes, we cannot say we love God if we hate our neighbor. If we are not in right relationship with our

neighbor, then our relationship with God is also distorted.

Charity and Justice are the two legs of putting our faith into action. Both are needed in our continuing mission of following Christ. Some feel called to provide the immediate response of charity to a person in need. For others, wanting to address the underlying root of a social problem leads them to the advocacy work of justice.

The important thing for all of us is to understand that we are obligated by our faith to participate in the social mission of the church. Practicing our faith in daily life means that we acknowledge each other as one family of God. We help to keep the "invisibility" of poverty visible when we make the effort to identify brothers and sisters in need.

Get to know those in your community, and find out where God is calling you to make a difference.



TV program notes — week of March 16

By Harry Forbes
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) — Here are some television program notes for the week of March 16 with their TV Parental Guidelines ratings if available. They have not been reviewed and therefore are not necessarily recommended by the Office for Film & Broadcasting.

Sunday, March 16, 12:30-3:30 p.m. CDT (EWTN) "In Concert: Bach: St. Matthew's Passion." The Choir of Kings College and the Brandenburg Consort plumb the depths of Johann Sebastian Bach's great musical representation of Christ's passion.

Monday, March 17, 9-10 p.m. CDT (Discovery) "Mystery at the Monastery." Host archaeologist Scotty Moore travels to the eastern coast of Iceland where archae-

ologists unearthed a startling discovery: Within the ruins of a 16th-century monastery, the bones of a young man lay in perfect condition -- save for two smashed shoulder blades. Was this unusual injury the result of a freak accident? Or is this body linked to one of the darkest periods in Iceland's history, the Reformation? (TV-14 — parents strongly cautioned)

Tuesday, March 18, 7-7:30 p.m. CDT (ABC) "It's the Easter Beagle, Charlie Brown." The Emmy-nominated springtime "Peanuts" special produced and animated by the late cartoonist Charles M. Schulz in which Charlie, Sally, Lucy and Marcie must get ready for the big day by making several unsuccessful attempts to prepare eggs for coloring. Not to worry, the Easter Beagle steps in to take care of everything!

(TV-G — general audience)

Tuesday, March 18, 9-10 p.m. CDT (PBS) "Iron Ladies of Liberia." This intimate "Independent Lens" documentary goes behind the scenes with Africa's first freely elected female head of state, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, president of Liberia. By Daniel Junge and Siatta Scott-Johnson. Terrence Howard hosts (TV-PG — parental guidance suggested).

Thursday, March 20, 7-10 p.m. CDT (PBS) "New York City Opera: Madama Butterfly." The opera company presents Giacomo Puccini's story of a marriage between an American Navy officer and his geisha bride. (TV-PG — parental guidance suggested).

Friday, March 21, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. CDT (EWTN) "Celebration of the Lord's Passion With Pope Benedict XVI Live." The pope presides over the solemn celebra-

tion of Good Friday of the Lord's Passion, live from Rome.

Saturday, March 22, 4-7 p.m. CDT (EWTN) "Easter Vigil Mass With Pope Benedict XVI Live." The pope celebrates the Easter Vigil, live from Rome.

Saturday, March 22, 7-9 p.m. CDT (History) "Protestant Reformation." A documentary that sets out to show how the seeds of dissent blossomed into a spiritual, intellectual and cultural revolution that forever changed the shape of religion, through a blend of dramatic recreations, from the Spanish Inquisition to the debates of the American Pilgrims, as well as footage of key historical locations and contemporary images.

Forbes is director of the Office for Film & Broadcasting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Special Collections

Operation Rice Bowl — Sundays of Lent/Easter Sunday

Holy Land (Good Friday) — March 21

Collection For Home Missions — May 3-4

Ongoing Events

Grief Group — Have you experienced the death of a loved one? Join us in this on-going grief group on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room at Holy Family Church, 704 Mallette Drive, Victoria. For information, please call (361) 578-7572.

Mini-Life-Chain — In Victoria every Wednesday before the 2nd Thursday of each month. Call (361) 578-2506 or (361) 578-2002 for time and intersection location.

St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity/Secular Franciscans — For meeting dates call Mary Ann LeBlanc at (361) 575-1858.

Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity Emerging/Secular Franciscans — meets every other Wednesday from 7:00-9:00 p.m. For dates and location call Jay Howard at (361) 574-8487.

St. Padre Pio Prayer Group meets the 2nd Saturday of each month at St. Mary Church Activity Center (audio-visual room) in Victoria for a 7:30 a.m. Mass, followed by prayer and light refreshments.

Tridentine Mass (Latin) — is held the first and third Sunday of each month at St. Mary Church, St. Mary (outside of Hallettsville on FM 340) at 11:00 a.m. For more info. call (361) 594-3024.

Engaged Encounter — Register as soon as you have contacted your pastor due to limited space. **It is strongly recommended that you attend an encounter weekend four to six months prior to your wedding date.** For a registration form, contact your pastor, visit the **Web site at www.victoriadiocese.org/family/ee.htm**, or write to: Engaged Encounter, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, Texas 77903. The weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. The dates for 2008 are: June 27-29; Sept. 26-28; and Nov. 14-16. For more info., call (361) 573-0828 ext. 50. All registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Fee must accompany registration form.

Marriage Encounter — Marriage Encounter weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. For more information or to register, write or call Milton and Diane Rejcek, 2512 Hillcrest, Bay City, Texas 77414; (979) 245-0323; register@mevictoria.org www.mevictoria.org

Retrouvaille — The word Retrouvaille means 'rediscovery.' It is a program that offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse, and a loving relationship in your marriage. Tens of thousands headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending. Contact Gerd and Linda Conner (979) 543-3493 or (800) 470-2230 for more information or for dates in Texas, please go to www.retrouvaille.org or www.helpourmarriage.org.

The Beginning Experience — The Beginning Experience is an international ministry that helps divorced, separated and widowed individuals resolve their grief surrounding the loss of a marriage partner. For more information, go to their Web site: www.beginningexperience.org; e-mail: sanantonio@yahoocom; phone: (210) 734-2146.

Singles — Catholic Singles, 40 and over, meet every second and fourth Thursday of the month at Holy Family Education Building at 7:00 p.m. Call Georgia (361) 573-9435, or Jean at (361) 578-8760, or Sue at (361) 578-3106.

Young Adults — Between the ages of 21 and 45 meet for an evening of fellowship and good company every 1st and 3rd Thursday at Holy Family at 7:00 p.m. Call Jim Wearden at (361) 579-9737 or (361) 649-9157.

ACTS Retreats — For more information see the ACTS Web site at www.actsmissions.org.

Natural Family Planning — For English or bilingual sessions of the **Sympto-Thermal Method (S-TM)** in Palacios, call Rene and Wilma Galvan at (361) 972-5030. Available for counseling and classes. For information about the Sympto-Thermal Method in the Victoria area, contact Rudy and Estella DeLos Santos (361) 894-6950. Introductory presentations on the **Creighton Model Ovulation Method** are offered in Wharton at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and in East Bernard at Holy Cross Catholic Church. Please contact Melissa Morse at (979) 335-7306 for more information or to register for classes. **Natural Family Planning is the only church approved form of family planning.**

Goliad — Presidio La Bahia Museum and Visitor Center — a National Historic Landmark — is the only Spanish fort remaining in the possession of the Catholic Church in North America. A tour program is available to groups. The presidio is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is closed on major holidays. Admission is \$3 for adults and \$1 for children under 12. The fort is handicapped accessible. For more information call (361) 645-3752 or see the Web site at www.presidiolabahia.org.

Picnics, Activities, etc.

March

East Bernard — Knights of Columbus 2500 Fish Fry every Friday night until March 21 at the Riverside Hall. Serving all you can eat fresh catfish fillets, french fries, hush puppies, cole slaw, pinto beans and tea from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. for \$8 p/p; (children 6-11 \$3.50 p/p - inside only). Drive-thru and plates-to-go available at \$7 p/p. Proceeds to benefit local scholarships and charities. Catholic Daughters will have a bake sale at the fish fry with all proceeds towards Holy Cross playground equipment.

Victoria — KJZT 101 will hold a bake sale at Holy Family Church March 8 — 9 after all Masses.

Blessing — Knights of Columbus Council 4307 will sponsor their annual fish fry and raffle on March 9. It will be held

When & Where

at St. Peter Parish Hall. Fried-catfish with all the trimmings will be served from 10:30 a.m. till 1:00 p.m. Plates - \$7.00 each (includes dessert and drink). An auction will also be held during the event. The proceeds will benefit Knights of Columbus scholarships and charities.

New Taiton — St. John's Altar Society Annual Chicken Dinner March 9 at the Taiton Community Center with serving beginning at 11:00 a.m. Dine-in or plates-to-go with fried-chicken, homemade dressing and all trimmings at \$7 p/p. There will be an auction, cakewalk, country store, kiddy area, raffle and silent auction.

Austwell/Tivoli — Friday, March 14 the Catholic Community of Austwell/Tivoli will hold its annual Fish Fry. Fried-catfish with all the trimmings and tea for \$6 p/p will be served starting at 6:30 p.m. in Our Lady of Guadalupe church hall. Dine-in or to-go. Look for signs. One block off Hwy. 35 at Tivoli.

Indiana — Benedictine Life Weekend Are you searching for God's direction in life? Do you wonder if monastic life could be the right fit? Would you like the chance to check it out? If so, we invite you to visit our community for a Benedictine Life Weekend, March 14-16, at Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Indiana. Open to single, Catholic women, ages 19-40, discerning religious life. Contact Sister Agnes Marie Dauby or Sister Michelle Sinkhorn at 802 E. 10th Street, Ferdinand, IN 47532; or call (800) 738-9999; e-mail: vocation@thedome.org or visit the Web site at www.thedome.org.

Victoria — Knights of Columbus Council 1329 chicken-barbecue fund-raiser March 16 at the KC Hall. The price is \$6 per chicken. Beans and Spanish rice available for \$1 per pint. Sale starts at 8:30 a.m. Proceeds benefit council's projects.

Victoria — A SPECIAL NEEDS, one-day ACTS retreat will be held March 29 at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral. Anyone in the Victoria area with a disability or special need is welcomed to attend. Applications will be available soon throughout the diocese. Please contact Vicki Pyatt, director, at (361) 572-9301 or Pam Kovar, co-director, at (361) 781-0338 for more information. Anyone who is an ACTS brother or sister and interested in volunteering to be a part of the team for this retreat, please contact Vicki or Pam as well.

El Campo — KC Spring Picnic March 30 at the KC Hall (Hwy. 71 and Armory Road). A chicken-barbecue dinner will be served beginning at 11:00 a.m. There will be an auction, cakewalk and free dance from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. with Texas Sound Check and much more.

Upcoming Events

Victoria — Charismatic Mass at Our Lady of Sorrows on April 2, with Father Stan DuBoe, pastor. Rosary begins at 7:00 p.m.; Mass at 7:30 p.m., 208 W. River Street.

Shiner — Annual Sts. Cyril and Methodius Gala April 5 at the American Legion Hall. This year will be Taste of Texas "Italiano!" A limited number of dinner reservations available. Call (361) 594-3836 for more information. All proceeds will benefit Sts. Cyril and Methodius Education Endowment Funds.

World Day of Prayer For Vocations — April 16

Victoria — Knights of Columbus Council 1329 chicken-barbecue fund-raiser April 20 at the KC Hall. The price is \$6 per chicken. Beans and Spanish rice available for \$1 per pint. Sale starts at 8:30 a.m. Proceeds benefit council's projects.

Victoria — Our Lady of Lourdes Altar Society Games Party April 21 at the KC Hall (3610 Ben Wilson). Doors open from 6:00 to 9:30 p.m. with a light supper, door prizes, raffle and silent auction. Entrance fee of \$6 p/p. Make reservations by April 18 by calling Mary Bianchi 573-9183; Diane Heller 573-7093; Donna Maxey 576-2670; or Leona Sedlar 575-3160.

Victoria — St. Mary's Altar Society Annual Games Party, with door prizes, raffle, country store, and refreshments, will be held Tuesday, April 22 from Noon to 4 p.m., at St. Mary's Activity Center. Admission fee is \$6. For Reservations Call: Martha Hamel (361) 575-1932 or Ann Carver (361) 575-2050. Raffle prizes include king-size "Velvet Garden" quilt, \$100 gift certificate, two \$50 gift certificates, queen sheet set, embroidered pillow cases, quilted table runner and gift basket.

Weimar — St. Michael Spring Festival April 27 at Veterans Memorial Park. A fried-chicken and sausage dinner will be served starting at 11:00 a.m. at \$7 p/p for adults and \$4 p/p for children; drive-thru plates at \$7 p/p available only at St. Michael Family Center. The auction begins at 1:00 p.m. There will be fun and games along with refreshments and food throughout the day. Music by The Mailman Band (11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) and Czechaholics and Red Ravens (1:00 to 9:00 p.m.).

Victoria — Holy Family Festival May 4 at the community center. A barbecue-beef and sausage dinner will be served from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with curb service available for plates-to-go. There will be a country store, cake wheel, children's games and more. Auction begins at 1:00 p.m.

Austin — The Texas Catholic Conference (TCC) will hold a Seminar on Parish Management, Management Skills in the Local Church, May 12 — 16 at the Austin Airport Hilton. Topics to be discussed include: Pastoral Planning and the Role of Management; Organization of Parish Volunteers; Parishes with Catholic Schools; Stewardship; Forming a Parish into a Community; Parish Social Ministry; Public Policy Issues; Pastoral Leader and Personnel Function; Conflict Resolution; and Recognizing Diversity in the Faith Dimensions of the Parish Community. Registration for the weeklong conference is \$250 payable to the Texas Catholic Conference, mailed to Parish Management Seminar, 1625 Rutherford Lane, Bldg. D., Austin, TX 78754. Rooms are available at the Austin Airport Hilton for \$99/night. Call (512) 385-6767 and say you are attending the TCC Parish Management Seminar. Rooms must be reserved by April 12. Call Becky Sierra for registration form and more information at (512) 339-9882 or becky@txcatholic.org.

Victoria — Knights of Columbus Council 1329 chicken-barbecue fund-raiser May 18 at the KC Hall. The price is \$6 per chicken. Beans and Spanish rice available for \$1 per pint. Sale starts at 8:30 a.m. Proceeds benefit council's projects.

Pilgrimage to Italy for Deaf — Official American Catholic Delegation to the International Deaf Community Papal Audience June 25, 2008. Pilgrimage to Italy June 16 — 27, 2008, includes Rome, Assisi, Florence, Padua and Venice, \$3,285 land/air from Dallas and other cities. For information and brochures, contact Travel Provider — Best Catholic Pilgrimages; 800-908-2378; FAX 888-647-2378; e-mail: info@bestcatholic.com.

Do You Have A When & Where Item?
FAX To: (361) 573-5725



Bringing the Bible and the Mass to Life

A reflection on my pilgrimage to the Holy Land

By Cynthia Brewer

My husband, Greg, and I were blessed to be able to go to the Holy Land on the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation's (HCEF's) "fact finding" trip January 7-20 of this year. It was truly a trip that was out of the ordinary.

It was a blessing to see, feel and breathe the air where Jesus lived, preached, suffered, died and rose again. The pictures in my mind and the people, places, food and sounds I experienced will forever bring the memories of Christ's life to my mind.

Having spent time where Jesus actually lived has made the Bible come to life for both Greg and me. We no longer have to imagine the area where the shepherds witnessed the angels' jubilation, the site of Jesus' baptism, or the area where Jesus fed the multitudes. We've seen the sites and

in Texas, in the year 2008.

Catholics are so blessed that the Church has preserved the Sacraments Christ established, for it is through them that he is still physically present to us. It is

not only God's miracle that he became man and lived on the earth with us humans 2,000 years ago, it is also his miracle that he is still present to us in his Holy Eucharist at each and every Mass (Mt 26:26-28; Mk 14:22-24; Lk 22:17-20; John 6; and 1 Cor 11:17-32).

Enjoy the photographs and highlights of our journey.



Site of Jesus' baptism in Jordan – where the Jordan River flowed 2,000 years ago (about 200 yards from where it flows today) (Mk 1:9-11).



The Milk Grotto of the Blessed Virgin Mary is the cave believed to be where the Holy Family lived in Bethlehem before the flight to Egypt. It is said that while the Blessed Mother nursed baby Jesus, milk from her breast dropped onto the stone floor causing the floor and walls to turn white.

Through faith, prayer and drinking the powdered stone (milk powder), thousands of pilgrims have had infertility problems cured.

Inset: In the rectory are letters and pictures of parents with their newborn babies – attesting to the healing of their infertility problems.



City street in Bethlehem



The Church of the Holy Sepulcher – shared/divided between the Catholic (Latin) and Orthodox churches



The city of Jerusalem



Looking from Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley toward the Mt. of Olives (Jn 18:1-14).

can relive them every time we open the Bible, pray the rosary, or hear the readings at Mass.

However, the most enlightening thing to have happened because of our trip to the Holy Land did not happen in the Holy Land, but rather happened since returning home. Both Greg and I feel the best thing about having taken a trip to the Holy Land, was how the experience has brought the Mass to life for us.

When we came back and I attended Mass the next day, the realization dawned on me that although Christ lived in the Holy Land, he is more present to us at the Mass in the Eucharist than in the history and the hills of Judea. Christ came to life for me not at his birth site in Bethlehem, nor at the tomb of his resurrection near Mt. Calvary. It took me that long journey to realize that although Jesus ascended into Heaven from the top of the Mount of Olives, through the establishment of the Eucharist at the Last Supper, he never really left us.

Although the Church has always taught this and I've always known it in my mind, it became evidently clear to my heart only after experiencing his homeland and then being welcomed back by Jesus in the Mass



Steps leading from the Kidron Valley to the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu, the house of Caiaphas, the high priest. This is also where Peter denied Jesus three times (Mk 14:66-72).



The Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth
Inset: The Grotto (inside Basilica) where the Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary (Lk 1:26-38)



Mount of Beatitudes overlooking the Sea of Galilee (Mt 5:1-12)

The shore of the Sea of Galilee where Jesus established Peter's primacy (Jn 21:1-19)

